

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

(11)Publication number : 2002-157711

(43)Date of publication of application : 31.05.2002

(51)Int. Cl. G11B 5/39

G01R 33/09

H01F 10/32

H01L 43/08

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(54) CPP STRUCTURAL SPIN VALVE HEAD

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a CPP structural spin valve head, by which the large resistance variation is surely obtainable by the small number of laminated layers.

SOLUTION: In the CPP structural spin valve head 36, a sense current goes through an insulated layer 54. The movement of electron across the insulated layer 54 is supposed to be realized by the operation of the minute defect, i.e., a pin hole formed on the insulated layer 54. The current is concentrated to the pin hole. Thus, in such spin valve head 36, the large resistance variation is realized in accordance with the inversion of the magnetizing direction established in a ferromagnetic layer 56 at the free side, similarly in the case the passing cross sectional surface of the current is reduced. This sort of the CPP structural spin valve head 36 remarkably contributes to the further increase of density of the magnetic recording. In this spin valve head

36, the resistance value is reduced as compared to that of a so-called tunnel junction magneto-resistance effect element. The generation of thermal noise is suppressed.

LEGAL STATUS

[Date of request for examination] 19.12.2003

[Date of sending the examiner's
decision of rejection] 05.04.2005

[Kind of final disposal of
application other than the
examiner's decision of rejection or
application converted registration]

[Date of final disposal for
application]

[Patent number]

[Date of registration]

[Number of appeal against
examiner's decision of rejection] 2005-008300

[Date of requesting appeal against
examiner's decision of rejection] 06.05.2005

[Date of extinction of right]

CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] The CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a fixed side ferromagnetism layer.

[Claim 2] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by including the compound with which said insulating layer consists of at least two kinds of elements in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 1.

[Claim 3] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by said compound being oxide in a CPP structure spin valve head according to

claim 2.

[Claim 4] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by putting said insulating layer in one pair of fixed side ferromagnetism layers in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 1.

[Claim 5] The CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer.

[Claim 6] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by including the compound with which said insulating layer consists of at least two kinds of elements in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 5.

[Claim 7] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by said compound being oxide in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 6.

[Claim 8] It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by putting said insulating layer in a freedom side [one pair] ferromagnetism layer in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 5.

[Claim 9] The CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having further the insulating layer separated from said nonmagnetic middle class in said fixed side ferromagnetism layer in a CPP structure spin valve head according to claim 5.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the CPP (current perpendicular-to-the-plane) structure spin valve head which circulates a sense current along the direction of a vertical of the 1st and 2nd interfaces especially within such spin bulb film about the spin bulb film equipped with a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic middle class who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, and the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts the nonmagnetic middle class in the 2nd interface.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] With a CPP structure magneto-resistive effect head, the more the number of laminatings of the GMR (giant magneto-resistance) film by which a laminating is carried out increases, the more big resistance variation is obtained. As everyone knows, if resistance variation is large, the magnetic information on binary can be correctly read with the sense current of a small current value. The especially big resistance variation irrespective of contraction of core width of face with such CPP structure magneto-resistive effect heads is maintainable. It is thought that a CPP structure magneto-resistive effect head greatly contributes to much more densification of magnetic recording.

[0003]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] However, if the laminating of many GMR film is carried out in this way, even if a recording track consistency can improve with contraction of core width of face, the improvement in linear density, i.e., shortening of bit length, will be barred. The densification of magnetic recording cannot be attained as expected. And it is difficult to control the magnetic domain of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer by such CPP structure magneto-resistive effect heads.

[0004] This invention was made in view of the above-mentioned actual condition, and aims at offering the CPP structure spin valve head which can obtain certainly big resistance variation with the small number of laminatings.

[0005]

[Means for Solving the Problem] In order to attain the above-mentioned purpose, according to the 1st invention, the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a fixed side ferromagnetism layer is offered.

[0006] Moreover, according to the 2nd invention, the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer is offered.

[0007] In such CPP structure spin valve heads, the magnetization direction of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer is rotated according to the sense of the field which acts from the outside. In this way, rotation of the magnetization direction of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer changes the electric resistance of a spin valve head a lot. If a sense current circulates along the direction of a vertical of the 1st interface or the 2nd interface, according to change of electric resistance, change (for example, electrical-potential-difference change) of level will appear on a sense current.

[0008] At this time, a sense current runs through an insulating layer in a spin valve head. It is thought that migration of the electron over an insulating layer is realized by work, the detailed defect, i.e., the pinhole, formed in an insulating layer. A current is concentrated on a pinhole. Consequently, in such spin valve heads, big resistance variation is realizable like the time of the passage cross section of a current being reduced according to reversal of the magnetization direction established in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer. Such CPP structure spin valve heads can greatly contribute to much more densification of magnetic recording. And in such spin valve heads, resistance is reduced by the condition about of 1/10 compared with the so-called tunnel junction magneto-resistive effect (TMR) component. The so-called generating of a thermal noise can be controlled. However, a sense current should just be equipped with the direction component of a vertical at least.

[0009] An insulating layer should just contain the compound which consists of at least two kinds of elements. Others, a nitride and carbide, and boride can be contained in a compound at this time.

[oxide] For example, an insulating layer may be put in one pair of fixed side ferromagnetism layers, or a freedom side [one pair] ferromagnetism layer. If in charge of formation of an insulating layer, the deposition of a compound based on the sputtering method may be used, for example. In addition, an insulating layer can be formed if reactant elements, such as oxygen and nitrogen, are connected to the front face of a fixed side ferromagnetism layer or a freedom side ferromagnetism layer.

[0010] Furthermore, according to the 3rd invention, the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, the 1st insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a fixed

side ferromagnetism layer, and the 2nd insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer is offered.

[0011] According to such CPP structure spin valve heads, a current is concentrated on a pinhole by work, the detailed defect, i.e., the pinhole, formed in an insulating layer, like the above-mentioned. Consequently, in such spin valve heads, big resistance variation is realizable like the time of the passage cross section of a current being reduced according to reversal of the magnetization direction established in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer. And by this spin valve head, it is thought that the so-called specular dispersion is attained between one pair of insulating layers. Consequently, according to the magnetization direction established in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, still bigger resistance variation is realizable.

[0012] In addition, such CPP structure spin valve heads should just be used, being included in a magnetic-recording medium driving gear called hard disk drive (HDD).

[0013]

[Embodiment of the Invention] Hereafter, 1 operation gestalt of this invention is explained, referring to an accompanying drawing.

[0014] Drawing 1 shows roughly one example of a magnetic-recording medium driving gear, i.e., the internal structure of hard disk drive (HDD) 11. This HDD11 is equipped with the body 12 of a case of the cube type which divides the building envelope of a flat rectangular parallelepiped. The magnetic disk 13 of one or more sheets as a record medium is held in hold space. The revolving shaft of a spindle motor 14 is equipped with a magnetic disk 13. A spindle motor 14 can rotate a magnetic disk 13 at high speed, such as for example, 7200rpm and 10000rpm. It is combined with the body 12 of a case, the lid (not shown), i.e., covering, which seals hold space between the bodies 12 of a case.

[0015] The carriage 16 rocked by the circumference of the pivot 15 prolonged perpendicularly is further held in hold space. This carriage 16 is equipped with the swinging arm 17 of the rigid body horizontally prolonged from a pivot 15, and the elastic suspension 18 which is attached at the tip of this swinging arm 17, and extends ahead from a swinging arm 17. As everyone knows, at the tip of the elastic suspension 18, the cantilevered suspension of the surfacing head slider 19 is carried out by work of the so-called gimbal spring (not shown). Pressure acts on the surfacing head slider 19 from the elastic suspension 18 toward the front face of a magnetic disk 13. Buoyancy acts on the surfacing head slider 19 by work of the air current generated on the front face of a magnetic disk 13 based on rotation of a magnetic disk 13.

The surfacing head slider 19 can continue surfacing with rigidity high in comparison during rotation of a magnetic disk 13 in the balance of the pressure of the elastic suspension 18, and buoyancy.

[0016] If carriage 16 rocks by the circumference of a pivot 15 during surfacing of such a surfacing head slider 19, the surfacing head slider 19 can cross the front face of a magnetic disk 13 to radial. Based on such migration, the surfacing head slider 19 is positioned in the recording track of the request on a magnetic disk 13. At this time, rocking of carriage 16 should just be realized through work of an actuator 21 called a voice coil motor (VCM). As everyone knows, when the magnetic disk 13 of two or more sheets is incorporated in the body 12 of a case, two elastic suspensions 18 are carried to one swinging arm 17 between magnetic-disk 13 adjoining comrades.

[0017] Drawing 2 shows one example of the surfacing head slider 19. This surfacing head slider 19 is aluminum 203 which is joined to the air outflow edge of the body 22 of a slider made from aluminum₂ O₃-TiC (Al₂O₃-TiC) formed in a flat rectangular parallelepiped, and this body 22 of a slider, and builds in the read-out write-in head 23. It has the film 24 with a built-in head component of alumina. It is specified on the body 22 of a slider, and the film 24 with a built-in head component, the medium opposed face 25, i.e., the surfacing side, which counters a magnetic disk 13. The air current 26 generated based on rotation of a magnetic disk 13 is responded to by the surfacing side 25.

[0018] The rail 27 of two muscles prolonged toward an air outflow edge from an airstream ON edge is formed in the surfacing side 25. So-called ABS (air bearing surface) 28 is specified in the summit side of each rail 27. In ABS 28, the above-mentioned buoyancy is generated according to work of an air current 26. It was embedded on the film 24 with a built-in head component, and reads, and the write-in head 23 is exposed by ABS 28 so that it may be mentioned later. In addition, the gestalt of the surfacing head slider 19 is not restricted to such gestalten.

[0019] Drawing 3 shows the situation of the surfacing side 25 to a detail. The read-out write-in head 23 is equipped with the CPP structure spin valve-head component 30 which reads binary information based on the resistance which changes according to the field which acts from a magnetic disk 13, and the induction write-in head component 31 which writes binary information in a magnetic disk 13 using the field which occurs by the electric conduction coil pattern (not shown). The spin valve-head component 30 is formed in the front face of the lower shielding layer 32 which consists of ingredients, such as FeN and NiFe. The lower shielding layer 32 is aluminum 203 which constitutes the

bottom half layer of the above-mentioned film 24 with a built-in head component. It spreads on the front face of the film (alumina) 33. The spin valve-head component 30 is aluminum 203 by which a laminating is carried out to the front face of the lower shielding layer 32. It is embedded at a non-magnetic layer 34 called the film (alumina).

[0020] The spin valve-head component 30 is equipped with the bottom electrode terminal layer 35 which spreads along the front face of the basic layer 32, i.e., a lower shielding layer. This bottom electrode terminal layer 35 should just be formed from conductive metallic materials, such as Au and Cu. The laminating of the spin bulb film 36 is carried out to the front face of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35. The detail of the spin bulb film 36 is mentioned later.

[0021] This spin bulb film 36 is put between one pair of magnetic-domain control film 37 which spreads along the front face of the basic layer 32, i.e., a lower shielding layer, similarly. The magnetic-domain control film 37 should just consist of CoCrPt(s). This magnetic-domain control film 37 can specify the magnetization direction as everyone knows along one direction which crosses the spin bulb film 36. By work of this magnetic-domain control film 37, single domain-ization of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer (freelayer) is realized within the spin bulb film 36. The spin bulb film 36 and the magnetic-domain control film 37 are embedded at the insulating layer 38 by which a laminating is carried out to the front face of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35. An insulating layer 38 is aluminum 203. The film and SiO₂ What is necessary is just to consist of film.

[0022] The up shielding layer 39 spreads in the front face of an insulating layer 38. Besides, the section shielding layer 39 puts the spin bulb film 36 between the lower shielding layers 32. The up shielding layer 39 should just consist of NiFe(s). The up shielding layer 39 prolonged from the interval of an insulating layer 38 is caught by the front face of the spin bulb film 36. That is, the up shielding layer 39 which contacts the spin bulb film 36 in this way functions as a top electrode terminal layer of the spin valve-head component 30.

Besides, a sense current can be supplied to the spin bulb film 36 by work of the section shielding layer 39 and the bottom electrode terminal layer 35. The up shielding layer 39 and the magnetic-domain control film 37 are mutually isolated by work of an insulating layer 38.

[0023] The above up shielding layers 39 function on coincidence as a lower magnetic pole layer of the induction write-in head component 31. That is, the nonmagnetic gap layer 40 is arranged in the front face of the up shielding layer 39. The nonmagnetic gap layer 40 should just

consist of aluminum 203 (alumina). On both sides of this nonmagnetic gap layer 40, the up magnetic pole layer 41 faces the up shielding layer 39. The up magnetic pole layer 41 should just consist of NiFe(s). As everyone knows, if a field occurs by the electric conduction coil pattern, by work of the nonmagnetic gap layer 40, the magnetic-flux style which goes back and forth the up magnetic pole layer 41 and the up shielding layer 39 will leak from the surfacing side 25, and it will come out of it. In this way, it leaks and a record field (gap field) is formed of the magnetic-flux style which comes out.

[0024] The up magnetic pole layer 41 is aluminum 203 which spreads along the front face of the nonmagnetic gap layer 40. It is covered with the film (alumina) 42. This aluminum 203 The film 42 constitutes the top half layer of the above-mentioned film 24 with a built-in head component. Namely, aluminum 203 The film 42 is the above-mentioned aluminum 203. It collaborates with the film 33 and the head component internal-organs film 24 is constituted.

[0025] Here, the structure of the spin bulb film 36 concerning the 1st operation gestalt of this invention is explained to a detail. This spin bulb film 36 is constituted by the single spin bulb film of a reverse laminated structure as shown in drawing 4 . That is, the spin bulb film 36 is equipped with the substrate layer 51 which spreads on the front face of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35. This substrate layer 51 should just consist of Ta layer 51a of about 5.0nm of thickness which spreads on the front face of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35, and NiFe layer 51b of about 2.0nm of thickness which spreads on the front face of this Ta layer 51a. The antiferromagnetism layer (pinning layer) 52 which consists of PdPtMn layers of about 15.0nm of thickness lays on top of the front face of the substrate layer 51.

[0026] The laminating of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer (pinned layer) 53 is carried out to the front face of the antiferromagnetism layer 52. The laminating of this fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 is carried out to 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a which spreads on the front face of the antiferromagnetism layer 52, for example, catches an insulating layer 54 on a front face, and the front face of an insulating layer 54, and it is equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 54b which puts an insulating layer 54 between 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a. An insulating layer 54 should just be formed by the oxide film of for example, 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a. 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a and 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 53b should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness.

[0027] In the front face of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, the laminating of the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 who consists of Cu(s) of about 2.8nm of thickness, and the freedom side ferromagnetism layer (free layer) 56 which consists of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness is carried out to sequence. The laminating of the Ta layer 57 of about 5.0nm of thickness is carried out to the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. Cap layers (not shown), such as Cu layer of about 10.0nm of thickness and Au layer of about 10.0nm of thickness, may be formed in the front face of the Ta layer 57 in order.

[0028] The 1st interface BF is prescribed by such spin bulb film 36 among the freedom side ferromagnetism layers 56 and the nonmagnetic interlayers 55 who pile up mutually. Similarly, the 2nd interface BS is specified among the fixed side ferromagnetism layers 53 and the nonmagnetic interlayers 55 who pile up mutually. An insulating layer 54 can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 53b in the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53.

[0029] If the spin valve-head component 30 is opposed to the front face of a magnetic disk 13 in read-out of magnetic information, by the spin bulb film 36, the magnetization direction of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 will be rotated as everyone knows according to the sense of the field which acts from a magnetic disk 13. In this way, rotation of the magnetization direction of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 changes the electric resistance of the spin bulb film 36 a lot. Therefore, if a sense current is supplied to the spin bulb film 36 from the bottom shielding layer 39 and the bottom electrode terminal layer 35, the level of the electrical signal taken out from the bottom shielding layer 39 and the bottom electrode terminal layer 35 according to change of electric resistance will change. Binary information can be read according to change of this level.

[0030] At this time, the current which flows between the bottom shielding layer 39 and the bottom electrode terminal layers 35 runs through an insulating layer 54 with the spin valve-head component 30. As shown in drawing 5, it is thought that migration of the electron over an insulating layer 54 is realized by work, the detailed defect 58, i.e., the pinhole, formed in an insulating layer 54. A current is concentrated on a pinhole 58. Consequently, with such spin valve-head components 30, big resistance variation is realizable like the time of the passage cross section of a current being reduced according to reversal of the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. It is detectable, change, i.e., electrical-potential-

difference change, of level sufficient with the sense current of a small current value. Therefore, such CPP structure spin valve-head components 30 can greatly contribute to reduction of much more densification of magnetic recording, or power consumption. And with such spin valve-head components 30, resistance is reduced by the condition about of 1/10 compared with the so-called tunnel junction magneto-resistive effect (TMR) component. The so-called generating of a thermal noise can be controlled. And the magnetic domain of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 is easily controllable by work of one pair of magnetic-domain control film 37 which puts the spin bulb film 36 in comparison with such spin valve-head components 30.

[0031] Next, the manufacture approach of the spin valve-head component 30 is explained briefly. As everyone knows, in the front face of the Al Chick wafer (not shown), it is aluminum 203. The film 33 is formed. This aluminum 203 Laminating formation of the lower shielding layer 32 is carried out on the film 33. Then, in the front face of the lower shielding layer 32, i.e., a basic layer, as shown in drawing 6 , laminating formation of the Au film 61 of about 10.0nm of thickness is carried out. This laminating is hit, for example, the sputtering method should just be used. The Au film 61 is modeled after the configuration of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35. Then, the laminating of the 1st material film 62 which consists of same layer structures as the spin bulb film 36 is carried out to the front face of the Au film 61. The detail of the formation process of this 1st material film 62 is mentioned later.

[0032] As shown in drawing 6 , on the 1st material film 62, the resist film 63 which a convention began to delete and was modeled after the configuration is formed continuously. For example, operation of ion milling processing shaves off the 1st material film 63 around the resist film 63, as shown in drawing 7 . In this way, the 1st material film 62 begins to be shaved by the 2nd material film 64 modeled after the regular configuration. The laminating of the CoCrPt layer 65 which puts between the front face of the Au film 61 the 2nd material film 64 which began to be shaved is carried out. The resist film 63 should just be removed after the laminating of the CoCrPt layer 65. In this way, the 2nd material film 64 and the CoCrPt layer 65 by which laminating formation was carried out at the regular configuration begin to be deleted as everyone knows by the long material 66 prolonged along with one straight line which crosses the 2nd material film 64.

[0033] As shown in drawing 8 , on the Au film 61, laminating formation of the insulating material film 67 is carried out continuously. The

insulating material film 67 is completely covered for the long material 66, and covers it. The resist film 68 is formed in the front face of the insulating material film 67. For example, operation of RIE (reactive ion etching) processing shaves off the insulating material film 67 around the resist film 68, as shown in drawing 9 . In this way, an insulating layer 38 begins to be deleted from the insulating material film 67. The front face of the spin bulb film 36 is exposed in the interval of an insulating layer 38. Then, the resist film 68 is removed.

[0034] As shown in drawing 10 , on an insulating layer 38, the laminating of the NiFe layer 69 is carried out further. This laminating is hit, for example, the sputtering method should just be used. The resist film 71 is formed in the front face of this NiFe layer 69. This resist film 71 models the configuration of the up shielding layer 39. For example, operation of RIE processing shaves off the NiFe layer 69 around the resist film 71, as shown in drawing 11 . In this way, the up shielding layer 39 begins to be deleted. Then, the resist film 71 is removed.

[0035] In this way, when the bottom electrode terminal layer 35, the spin bulb film 36, the magnetic-domain control film 37, an insulating layer 38, and the up shielding layer 39 are formed, in the front face of the lower shielding layer 32, it is aluminum 203. The film 34 is formed. The bottom electrode terminal layer 35, the spin bulb film 36, the magnetic-domain control film 37, an insulating layer 38, and the up shielding layer 39 are aluminum 203. It is embedded on the film 34 (for example, refer to drawing 3). Such aluminum 203 On the film 34, laminating formation of the nonmagnetic gap layer 40 and the up magnetic pole layer 41 of the induction write-in head component 31 is carried out as everyone knows at sequence. Such laminatings are preceded and it is aluminum 203. Flattening polish processing may be carried out by the film 34. When this flattening polish processing is carried out, the front face of the up shielding layer 39 is aluminum 203. It can expose in the interval of the film 34.

[0036] In formation of the material film 63, as shown in the front face of the bottom electrode terminal layer 35 at drawing 12 , laminating formation of the Ta layer 71 of about 5.0nm of thickness, the NiFe layer 72 of about 2.0nm of thickness, the PdPtMn layer 73 of about 15.0nm of thickness, and the CoFeB layer 74 of about 2.0nm of thickness is carried out at sequence. In such laminatings, for example, the sputtering method should just be enforced within a vacuum chamber. In a chamber, oxygen gas is introduced behind the laminating of the CoFeB layer 74. Consequently, the front face of the CoFeB layer 74 oxidizes. The oxide

film is formed in the front face of the CoFeB layer 74 by this oxidation reaction. Then, on the oxide film, laminating formation of the CoFeB layer of about 2.0nm of thickness, Cu layer of about 2.8nm of thickness, the CoFeB layer of about 2.0nm of thickness, and the Ta layer of about 5.0nm of thickness is carried out successively. In the front face of Ta layer, laminating formation of Cu layer of about 10.0nm of thickness or the Au layer of about 10.0nm of thickness may be carried out further. [0037] In forming an insulating layer 54 in the spin bulb film 36, by the manufacture approach of such spin valve-head components 30, oxygen gas should just be introduced in a chamber like the formation fault of the existing spin bulb film. Formation of an insulating layer 54 is easily realizable in comparison, diverting the existing manufacture approach. The existing manufacturing installation can be used. However, it replaces with installation of oxygen gas and the oxygen plasma may be used.

[0038] The above spin bulb film 36 may be constituted by the single spin bulb film of an order laminated structure as shown in drawing 13. That is, by this spin bulb film 36, the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, the nonmagnetic interlayer 55, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, the antiferromagnetism layer 52, and the Ta layer 57 lay on top of the front face of the substrate layer 51 successively. Between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 55, the 1st interface BF is specified like the above-mentioned. The 2nd interface BS is specified between the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 55. In the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, an insulating layer 54 is put between the 1st and the 2nd a little more than magnetic layers 53a and 53b. An insulating layer 54 can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a. Such insulating layers 54 should just consist of oxide film formed in the front face of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 53a like the above-mentioned.

[0039] Drawing 14 shows the structure of spin bulb film 36a concerning the 2nd operation gestalt of this invention. The laminating ferry structure film is used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 in this spin bulb film 36a. This laminating ferry structure film is equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75b which puts the Ru layer 76 of about 0.8nm of thickness between 1st a little more than magnetic layer 75a which spreads on the front face of the antiferromagnetism layer 52, and this 1st a little more than magnetic layer 75a. An insulating layer 54 is formed in the front face of 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75b like the above-mentioned. The

laminating of the 3rd a little more than magnetic layer 75c is further carried out to the front face of an insulating layer 54. In this way, an insulating layer 54 can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 3rd a little more than magnetic layer 75c. At this time, each ferromagnetic layers 75a-75c should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness. According to adoption of such laminating ferry structure film, as a result of fixing firmly the magnetization direction of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, compared with the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36, still bigger resistance variation is realizable. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted.

[0040] Drawing 15 shows the structure of spin bulb film 36b concerning the 3rd operation gestalt of this invention. In this spin bulb film 36b, insulating-layer 54b is put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and the Ta layer 57. Such insulating-layer 54b should just consist of for example, oxide film. Insulating-layer 54b can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. At this time, the thickness of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 or the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 should just be respectively set, for example as about 2.0nm. According to such spin bulb film 36b, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, big resistance variation is realizable like the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36 and 36a.

[0041] The oxide film is Fe 2O₃ of about 2.0nm of thickness by which laminating formation is carried out on the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. A layer and aluminum 2O₃ What is necessary is just to consist of layers. For example, the sputtering method should just be used for such laminating formation. In addition, in formation of the oxide film, like the above-mentioned, oxygen gas may be introduced in a chamber after membrane formation of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, and the oxygen plasma may be introduced in a chamber. Such oxygen gas and oxygen plasma trigger oxidation reaction on the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. Consequently, the oxide film is formed in the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. In such cases, oxidizing zones-ed, such as Cu layer of about 2.0nm of thickness and Ta layer of about 1.0nm of thickness, may be formed by the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 in advance of installation of oxygen gas or the oxygen plasma.

[0042] With this 3rd operation gestalt, the laminating ferry structure film is used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 like the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36a. This laminating ferry structure film is equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e which puts the Ru layer 76 of about 0.8nm of thickness between the 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layer which spreads on the front face of the antiferromagnetism layer 52, and the 75d of this 1st a little more than magnetic layer. The 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layers should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness. On the other hand, 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e should just be constituted by the CoFeB layer of about 2.5nm of thickness. According to adoption of such laminating ferry structure film, as a result of fixing firmly the magnetization direction of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, compared with the case where a CoFeB layer is simply adopted as the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, big resistance variation is realizable. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted.

[0043] With this 3rd operation gestalt, the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, may be put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and insulating-layer 54b so that clearly from drawing 15 . Such Cu layers 77 can fully weaken the coercive force H_c of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 so that it may be mentioned later. Moreover, insulating-layer 54b may be formed into the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, as shown in drawing 16 . Such insulating-layer 54b should just consist of oxide film put between the 1st and the 2nd a little more than magnetic layers 56a and 56b. Insulating-layer 54b can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a. At this time, the thickness of the 1st and the 2nd a little more than magnetic layers 56a and 56b should just be respectively set as about 2.0nm. The thickness of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 should just be set as about 2.0nm.

[0044] Drawing 17 shows the structure of spin bulb film 36c concerning the 4th operation gestalt of this invention. In addition to the insulating layer 54 formed into the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 as mentioned above, in this spin bulb film 36c, insulating-layer 54c is put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and the Ta layer 57. An insulating layer 54 can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 like the above-mentioned by mediation of 3rd a little more than

magnetic layer 79c in the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53. On the other hand, insulating-layer 54c can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. According to such spin bulb film 36c, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, big resistance variation is realizable like the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36, 36a, and 36b. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 like the above-mentioned.

[0045] Insulating-layer 54c is Fe 2O₃ of about 2.0nm of thickness by which laminating formation is carried out on the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 like the above-mentioned insulating-layer 54b. A layer and aluminum 2O₃ What is necessary is just to consist of layers. For example, the sputtering method should just be used for such laminating formation. In addition, in formation of the oxide film, like the above-mentioned, oxygen gas may be introduced in a chamber after membrane formation of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, and the oxygen plasma may be introduced in a chamber. Such oxygen gas and oxygen plasma trigger oxidation reaction on the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. Consequently, the oxide film is formed in the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. In such cases, oxidizing zones-ed, such as Cu layer of about 2.0nm of thickness and Ta layer of about 1.0nm of thickness, may be formed by the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 in advance of installation of oxygen gas or the oxygen plasma.

[0046] Especially by spin bulb film 36c concerning this 4th operation gestalt, as shown, for example in drawing 18 , it is thought that the so-called specular dispersion is realized between one pair of insulating layers 54 and 54c. Consequently, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, still bigger resistance variation can be attained so that it may be mentioned later. In addition, with this 4th operation gestalt, as shown, for example in drawing 19 , it may be put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and insulating-layer 54c, above-mentioned joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer.

[0047] Drawing 20 shows the structure of 36d of spin bulb film concerning the 5th operation gestalt of this invention. 36d of this spin bulb film is constituted by the so-called dual spin bulb film. That is,

by 36d of this spin bulb film, the substrate layer 51, the antiferromagnetism layer 52, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 that puts an insulating layer 54, the nonmagnetic interlayer 55, and the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 are accumulated in order like the above-mentioned. An insulating layer 54 can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 3rd a little more than magnetic layer 79c in the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53.

[0048] And on this freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, **** 78 in nonmagnetic, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 79, the antiferromagnetism layer 80, and the Ta layer 57 pile up in order. Between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 78, the 1st interface BF is specified like the above-mentioned. The 2nd interface BS is prescribed between the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 79 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 78 by on the other hand. The same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted.

[0049] With this 5th operation gestalt, the laminating ferry structure film is used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 79 like the above-mentioned. The laminating of this laminating ferry structure film is carried out to 1st a little more than magnetic layer 79a which spreads on the nonmagnetic interlayer's 78 front face, for example, catches 54d of insulating layers on a front face, and the front face of 54d of insulating layers, and it is equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 79b which puts 54d of insulating layers between 1st a little more than magnetic layer 79a. In this way, 54d of insulating layers can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 78 by mediation of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 79a. At this time, 54d of insulating layers should just be formed by the oxide film of for example, 1st a little more than magnetic layer 79a. The laminating of the Ru layer 76 of about 0.8nm of thickness is carried out to the front face of 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 79b. The laminating of the 3rd a little more than magnetic layer 79c is further carried out to the front face of the Ru layer 76. Each ferromagnetic layers 79a-79c should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness. In addition, the nonmagnetic interlayer 78 and the antiferromagnetism layer 80 should just be constituted like the above-mentioned nonmagnetic interlayer 55 or the antiferromagnetism layer 52.

[0050] According to 36d of such spin bulb film, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, big resistance variation is realizable like the above-

mentioned spin bulb film 36, 36a-36c. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layers 53 and 79 like the above-mentioned.

[0051] Drawing 21 shows the structure of spin bulb film 36e concerning the 6th operation gestalt of this invention. In this spin bulb film 36e, insulating-layer 54e is further formed into the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 by 36d of spin bulb film concerning the above-mentioned 5th operation gestalt. Such insulating-layer 54e should just consist of for example, oxide film. Insulating-layer 54e can be separated from each nonmagnetic interlayers 55 and 78 by mediation of each ferromagnetic layers 56a and 56b. At this time, the thickness of the ferromagnetic layers 56a and 56b should just be respectively set as about 2.0nm. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layers 53 and 79 like the above-mentioned.

[0052] According to such spin bulb film 36e, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, big resistance variation is realizable like the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36, 36a-36d. Especially, by this spin bulb film 36e, it is thought like the above-mentioned that the so-called specular dispersion is attained between insulating layers 54d and 54e and among insulating layers 54e and 54. Consequently, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, still bigger resistance variation can be attained so that it may be mentioned later.

[0053] The oxide film is Fe 2O₃ of about 2.0nm of thickness by which laminating formation is carried out on the front face of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a. A layer and aluminum 2O₃ What is necessary is just to consist of layers. For example, the sputtering method should just be used for such laminating formation. In addition, in formation of the oxide film, like the above-mentioned, oxygen gas may be introduced in a chamber after membrane formation of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a, and the oxygen plasma may be introduced in a chamber. Such oxygen gas and oxygen plasma trigger oxidation reaction on the front face of for example, 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a. Consequently, the oxide film is formed in the front face of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a. In such cases, oxidizing zones-ed, such as Cu layer of about 2.0nm of thickness and Ta layer of about 1.0nm of thickness, may be formed by the front face of 1st a little more than

magnetic layer 56a in advance of installation of oxygen gas or the oxygen plasma.

[0054] With this 6th operation gestalt, as shown in drawing 22 , the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, may be put in the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 further again, respectively between each ferromagnetic layers 56a and 56b and insulating-layer 54e. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned in drawing 22 . The overlapping explanation is omitted. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layers 53 and 79 like the above-mentioned.

[0055] Drawing 23 shows the structure of 36f of spin bulb film concerning the 7th operation gestalt of this invention. 36f of this spin bulb film is constituted by the dual spin bulb film which shares an antiferromagnetism layer between the spin bulb film of one pair of upper and lower sides. That is, the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, the nonmagnetic interlayer 55, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53, and the antiferromagnetism layer 52 lay on top of the front face of the substrate layer 51 successively. 54f of insulating layers is formed into the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56. 54f of such insulating layers should just consist of oxide film put between the 1st and the 2nd a little more than magnetic layers 56a and 56b. 54f of insulating layers can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 by mediation of 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 56b. At this time, the thickness of the 1st and the 2nd a little more than magnetic layers 56a and 56b should just be respectively set as about 2.0nm.

[0056] The laminating ferry structure film is used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53. This laminating ferry structure film should just be equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e which puts the Ru layer 76 of about 0.8nm of thickness between the 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layer which spreads on the nonmagnetic interlayer's 55 front face, and the 75d of this 1st a little more than magnetic layer. The 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layers should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.5nm of thickness. On the other hand, 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e should just be constituted by the CoFeB layer of about 2.0nm of thickness. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 like the above-mentioned. In addition, the same reference mark is given to the configuration which realizes the same operation and same function as the above-mentioned. The overlapping explanation is omitted.

[0057] By 36f of this spin bulb film, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 83, the nonmagnetic interlayer 84, the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 85, and the Ta layer 57 are accumulated in order on the antiferromagnetism layer 52. Between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 85 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 84, the 1st interface BF is specified like the above-mentioned. The 2nd interface BS is specified between the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 83 and the nonmagnetic interlayer 84.

[0058] 54g of insulating layers is put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 85 and the Ta layer 57. 54g of such insulating layers is Fe 203 of about 2.0nm of thickness like the above-mentioned. What is necessary is just to consist of layers. Fe 203 Laminating formation of the layer should just be carried out for example, by the sputtering method. In this way, 54g of insulating layers can be separated from the nonmagnetic interlayer 84 by mediation of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 85. At this time, the thickness of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 85 should just be set as about 2.0nm. The nonmagnetic interlayer 84 should just be constituted like the above-mentioned nonmagnetic interlayer 55.

[0059] The laminating ferry structure film is used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 83 at this time. This laminating ferry structure film should just be equipped with 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e which puts the Ru layer 76 of about 0.8nm of thickness between the 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layer which spreads on the front face of the antiferromagnetism layer 52, and the 75d of this 1st a little more than magnetic layer. The 75d of the 1st a little more than magnetic layers should just consist of CoFeB layers of about 2.0nm of thickness. On the other hand, 2nd a little more than magnetic layer 75e should just be constituted by the CoFeB layer of about 2.5nm of thickness. However, the laminating ferry structure film does not necessarily need to be used for the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 83 like the above-mentioned. According to 36f of such spin bulb film, according to the magnetization direction established in the freedom side ferromagnetism layers 56 and 85, big resistance variation is realizable like the above-mentioned spin bulb film 36, 36a-36e.

[0060] Resistance variation was surveyed with the above CPP structure spin valve-head components 30. 16 kinds of spin bulb film was prepared in this observation. As shown in drawing 4 , the spin bulb film 36 concerning the above-mentioned 1st operation gestalt was built into the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (a1). As shown in drawing 14 , spin bulb film 36a concerning the above-mentioned 2nd operation

gestalt was included in the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (b1).

[0061] Spin bulb film 36b concerning the above-mentioned 3rd operation gestalt was included in the spin valve-head component concerning sample (c1) - (c4). However, by the sample (c1), as shown in drawing 15, it is in charge of formation of insulating-layer 54b, and in the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, it is Fe 203 with the sputtering method. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out. Moreover, by the sample (c2), the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 was put to oxygen gas in formation of insulating-layer 54b. Furthermore, by the sample (c3), the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 was put to the oxygen plasma in formation of insulating-layer 54b. The Cu layer 77 was put also between neither of the cases, the case between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and insulating-layer 54b. By the sample (c4), as shown in drawing 16, insulating-layer 54b was embedded into the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 further again. It is in charge of formation of this insulating-layer 54b, and is Fe 203 with the sputtering method in the front face of 1st a little more than magnetic layer 56a. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out.

[0062] Spin bulb film 36c concerning the above-mentioned 4th operation gestalt was included in the spin valve-head component concerning sample (d1) - (d4). However, by the sample (d1), as shown in drawing 17, it is in charge of formation of insulating-layer 54c, and in the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, it is Fe 203 with the sputtering method. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out. Moreover, by the sample (d2), the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 was put to oxygen gas in formation of insulating-layer 54c. Furthermore, by the sample (d3), the front face of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 was put to the oxygen plasma in formation of insulating-layer 54c. The Cu layer 77 was put also between neither of the cases, the case between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and insulating-layer 54c. By the sample (d4), as shown in drawing 19, the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, was put between the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 and insulating-layer 54c further again. At this time, it is in charge of formation of insulating-layer 54c, and is Fe 203 with the sputtering method on the Cu layer 77. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out.

[0063] As shown in drawing 20, 36d of spin bulb film concerning the above-mentioned 5th operation gestalt was built into the spin valve-head

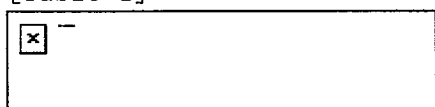
component concerning a sample (e1) further again. Similarly, spin bulb film 36e concerning the above-mentioned 6th operation gestalt was included in the spin valve-head component concerning sample (f1) - (f4). However, by the sample (f1), as shown in drawing 21, it is in charge of formation of insulating-layer 54e, and in the front face of ferromagnetic layer 56a, it is Fe 203 with the sputtering method. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out. Moreover, by the sample (f2), the front face of ferromagnetic layer 56a was put to oxygen gas in formation of insulating-layer 54e. Furthermore, by the sample (f3), the front face of ferromagnetic layer 56a was put to the oxygen plasma in formation of insulating-layer 54e. The Cu layer 77 was put also between neither of the cases, the case between the ferromagnetic layers 56a and 56b and insulating-layer 54e. By the sample (f4), as shown in drawing 22, the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, was put further again between each ferromagnetic layers 56a and 56b and insulating-layer 54e. At this time, it is in charge of formation of insulating-layer 54e, and is Fe 203 with the sputtering method on the Cu layer 77. A layer and aluminum 203 The laminating of the layer was carried out. In addition, as shown in drawing 23, 36f of spin bulb film concerning the above-mentioned 7th operation gestalt was built into the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (g1).

[0064] In this observation, four kinds of examples of a comparison were prepared. With the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (a0), the insulating layer 54 was removed from the above-mentioned sample (a1). The thickness of the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 was set as 4.5nm. With the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (b0), the insulating layer 54 was removed from the above-mentioned sample (b1). At this time, the thickness of a ferromagnetic layer in contact with the nonmagnetic interlayer 55 was set as 2.5 micrometers. With the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (e0), insulating layers 54 and 54d were removed from the above-mentioned sample (e1). The thickness of a ferromagnetic layer in contact with the nonmagnetic interlayers 55 and 78 was respectively set as 2.5 micrometers. Furthermore, with the spin valve-head component concerning a sample (g0), insulating layers 54f and 54g were removed from the above-mentioned sample (g1). [Table 1] -

[Table 4] was obtained as a result of such an observation.

[0065]

[Table 1]



[0066]

[Table 2]

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> --
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[0067]

[Table 3]

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> --
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[0068]

[Table 4]

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[0069] [Table 1] The sample from which the insulating layer was removed so that clearly from - [Table 4] (a0), (b0) -- and (e0) (g0) -- comparing -- a sample (a1), (b1), - (c1) (c4), (e1), and - (f1) (f4) -- and (g1) -- *** -- large -- component size 1.0micrometer² Resistance variation **R at the time increased. Consequently, based on insertion of insulating layers 54, 54b-54g, it was checked that resistance variation **R of the spin valve-head component 30 increases. especially -- a sample (c1), (c4), (d1), and (d4) -- and (f1) (f4) like The sputtering method is used and it is Fe 203. A layer and aluminum 203 With the spin valve-head component 30 in which oxide film called a layer was formed Remarkable big resistance variation deltaR was attained compared with the spin valve-head component in which the oxide film was formed based on installation and the oxygen plasma of oxygen gas. And so that clearly from sample (d1) - (d4) and sample (f1) - (f4) The insulating layers 54 and 54d separated from the nonmagnetic interlayers 55 and 78 in the fixed side ferromagnetism layer 53 and the ferromagnetic layers 53b and 79a in 79, It was checked with the spin valve-head component 30 which equips coincidence with the insulating layers 54c and 54e separated from the nonmagnetic middle class 55 and 78 in the freedom side ferromagnetism layers 56, 56a, and 56b that resistance variation **R

increases remarkably.

[0070] Furthermore, an artificer is [oxidation time amount i.e., the introductory persistence time of oxygen gas, and] 2 1 micrometer at the above-mentioned sample (b1). The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this time, the amount of installation of oxygen was set as 0.2 [sccm]. As shown in drawing 24 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount exceeded 100 [s], it was checked that high resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio are realized.

[0071] It is [the thickness of insulating-layer 54b, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (c1) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. As shown in drawing 25 (a) and (b), when the thickness of insulating-layer 54b was set as 3.0nm, it was checked that resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio show maximum.

[0072] It is [oxidation time amount, i.e., the introductory persistence time of oxygen gas, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (c2) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this time, the amount of installation of oxygen was set as 0.2 [sccm]. As shown in drawing 26 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount exceeded 100 [s], it was checked that high resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio are realized.

[0073] It is [oxidation time amount, i.e., the application persistence time of the oxygen plasma, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (c3) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this time, oxygen pressure was set as 1.0 [Pa]. As shown in drawing 27 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount exceeded 300 [s], it was checked that high resistance variation ΔR is attained. When oxidation time amount was set as 300 [s], it was checked that MR ratio shows maximum.

[0074] It is [the thickness of insulating-layer 54c, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (d1) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. As shown in drawing 28 (a) and (b), when the thickness of insulating-layer 54c was set as 3.0nm, it was checked that resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio show maximum.

[0075] It is [the oxidation time amount of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, i.e., the introductory persistence time of oxygen gas, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (d2) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this

time, the amount of installation of oxygen was set as 0.2 [sccm]. As shown in drawing 29 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount exceeded 100 [s], it was checked that high resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio are realized.

[0076] It is [the oxidation time amount of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56, i.e., the application persistence time of the oxygen plasma, and] 2.1 micrometer at the sample (d3) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this time, oxygen pressure was set as 1.0 [Pa]. As shown in drawing 30 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount exceeded 300 [s], it was checked that high resistance variation ΔR is attained. When oxidation time amount was set as 300 [s], it was checked that MR ratio shows maximum.

[0077] Furthermore, the artificer verified the relation between the thickness of the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, and resistance variation ΔR by the above-mentioned sample (d4). Consequently, with the CPP structure spin valve-head component 30, it was checked irrespective of the thickness of the Cu layer 77 that fixed resistance variation ΔR is attained so that clearly from drawing 31 (a). And when the thickness of the Cu layer 77 exceeded 1.0nm, it was checked that the coercive force H_c of the freedom side ferromagnetism layer 56 declines remarkably. The effectiveness of the joint filter layer 77, i.e., Cu layer, was proved. Especially the thickness of the Cu layer 77 is wanted to be set as 2.0nm or more.

[0078] As it is one of these, for example, is shown in drawing 31 (b), with the so-called CIP (current in-the-plane) structure spin valve-head component, resistance variation ΔR will decrease as the thickness of a joint filter layer, i.e., Cu layer, increases. With this CIP structure spin valve-head component, the current was supplied to spin bulb film 36c from one pair of electrode terminals which put spin bulb film 36c from both sides as everyone knows along the front face of the non-magnetic layer by which a laminating is carried out for example, on the above-mentioned lower shielding layer 32, or the magnetic-domain control film.

[0079] It is [the thickness of insulating-layer 54e, and] 2.1 micrometer at the sample (f1) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. As shown in drawing 32 (a) and (b), when the thickness of insulating-layer 54e was set as 3.0nm, it was checked that resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio show maximum.

[0080] It is [the oxidation time amount of ferromagnetic layer 56a,

i.e., the application persistence time of the oxygen plasma, and] 2 1 micrometer at the sample (f3) of the above-mentioned [an artificer] further again. The resistance R at the time and relation with resistance variation ΔR were verified. At this time, oxygen pressure was set as 1.0 [Pa]. As shown in drawing 33 (a) and (b), when oxidation time amount was set as 300 [s], it was checked that resistance variation ΔR and MR ratio show *****.

[0081] In addition, the above insulating layers 54, 54b-54g should just contain the compound which consists of at least two or more kinds of elements. Others, a nitride and carbide, and boride can be contained in such compounds. [oxide / above-mentioned]

[0082] (Additional remark 1) CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a fixed side ferromagnetism layer.

[0083] (Additional remark 2) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by including the compound with which said insulating layer consists of at least two kinds of elements in the CPP structure spin valve head of a publication in additional remark 1.

[0084] (Additional remark 3) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by said compound being oxide in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 2.

[0085] (Additional remark 4) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by putting said insulating layer in one pair of fixed side ferromagnetism layers in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 1.

[0086] (Additional remark 5) CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having a freedom side ferromagnetism layer, the nonmagnetic interlayer who contacts a freedom side ferromagnetism layer in the 1st interface, the fixed side ferromagnetism layer which contacts a nonmagnetic interlayer in the 2nd interface, and the insulating layer separated from a nonmagnetic interlayer in a freedom side ferromagnetism layer.

[0087] (Additional remark 6) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by including the compound with which said insulating layer consists of at least two kinds of elements in the CPP structure spin valve head of a publication in additional remark 5.

[0088] (Additional remark 7) It is the CPP structure spin valve head

characterized by said compound being oxide in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 6.

[0089] (Additional remark 8) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by putting said insulating layer in a freedom side [one pair] ferromagnetism layer in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 5.

[0090] (Additional remark 9) CPP structure spin valve head characterized by having further the insulating layer separated from said nonmagnetic middle class in said fixed side ferromagnetism layer in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 5.

[0091] (Additional remark 10) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by including the compound with which said insulating layer consists of at least two kinds of elements in the CPP structure spin valve head of a publication in additional remark 9.

[0092] (Additional remark 11) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by said compound being oxide in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 10.

[0093] (Additional remark 12) It is the CPP structure spin valve head characterized by putting said insulating layer in one pair of fixed side ferromagnetism layers in a CPP structure spin valve head given in additional remark 9.

[0094]

[Effect of the Invention] According to this invention, certainly big resistance variation can be attained as mentioned above with the same number of laminatings as the existing spin bulb film.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] It is the top view showing the structure of hard disk drive (HDD) roughly.

[Drawing 2] It is the expansion perspective view showing roughly the structure of the surfacing head slider concerning one example.

[Drawing 3] It is the expansion front view showing the situation of the read-out write-in head observed in respect of surfacing.

[Drawing 4] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 1st operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 5] It is the conceptual diagram showing work of an insulating layer.

[Drawing 6] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 7] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 8] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 9] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 10] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 11] It is the fragmentary sectional view showing one process included in the manufacture approach of a spin valve-head component.

[Drawing 12] It is the expansion fragmentary sectional view showing roughly the formation process of the insulating layer included in the spin bulb film.

[Drawing 13] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the example of a complete-change form of the 1st operation gestalt.

[Drawing 14] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 2nd operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 15] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 3rd operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 16] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the example of a complete-change form of the 3rd operation gestalt.

[Drawing 17] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 4th operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 18] It is the conceptual diagram showing the principle of specular diffusion.

[Drawing 19] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the example of a complete-change form of the 4th operation gestalt.

[Drawing 20] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 5th operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 21] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of

the spin bulb film concerning the 6th operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 22] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the example of a complete-change form of the 6th operation gestalt.

[Drawing 23] It is the expansion side elevation showing the structure of the spin bulb film concerning the 7th operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 24] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (b1), and is the graph which shows the relation between the oxidation time amount under (a) oxygen ambient atmosphere, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the oxidation time amount under (b) oxygen ambient atmosphere, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 25] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (c1), and is the graph which shows the relation between the thickness of the (a) insulating layer, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the thickness of the (b) insulating layer, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 26] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (c2), and is the graph which shows the relation between the oxidation time amount under (a) oxygen ambient atmosphere, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the oxidation time amount under (b) oxygen ambient atmosphere, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 27] It is the graph which is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (c3), and shows the relation between the oxidation time amount based on (a) oxygen plasma, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the oxidation time amount based on (b) oxygen plasma, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 28] relation with the thickness of an insulating layer, the resistance, and resistance variation which are a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (d1), and are formed on (a) freedom side ferromagnetism layer, and (b) -- it is the graph which similarly shows the relation between the thickness of an insulating layer, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 29] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (d2), and is the graph which shows the relation between the oxidation time amount of (a) freedom side ferromagnetism layer, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the oxidation time amount of (b) freedom side ferromagnetism layer, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 30] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (d3), and is the graph which shows the relation between the oxidation time amount of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer based on (a) oxygen plasma, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the

oxidation time amount of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer based on (b) oxygen plasma, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 31] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (d4), and is the graph which shows the relation between the thickness of a joint filter layer, and the coercive force of resistance variation and a freedom side ferromagnetism layer.

[Drawing 32] relation with the thickness of an insulating layer, the resistance, and resistance variation which are a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (f1), and are formed on (a) freedom side ferromagnetism layer, and (b) -- it is the graph which similarly shows the relation between the thickness of an insulating layer, and MR ratio.

[Drawing 33] It is a spin valve-head component concerning a sample (f3), and is the graph which shows the relation between the oxidation time amount of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer based on (a) oxygen plasma, resistance, and resistance variation, and the relation between the oxidation time amount of a freedom side ferromagnetism layer based on (b) oxygen plasma, and MR ratio.

[Description of Notations]

31 CPP structure spin valve head, 36, 36a-36h The spin bulb film, 53 Fixed side ferromagnetism layer, 54, 54b-54g An insulating layer, 55 A nonmagnetic interlayer, 56 A freedom side ferromagnetism layer, 78 A nonmagnetic interlayer, 79 A fixed side ferromagnetism layer, 83 fixed-side ferromagnetism layer, 84 A nonmagnetic interlayer, 85 A freedom side ferromagnetism layer, BF The 1st interface, BS The 2nd interface.

(19) 日本国特許庁 (J P)

(12) 公開特許公報 (A)

(11) 特許出願公開番号

特開2002-157711

(P2002-157711A)

(43) 公開日 平成14年5月31日 (2002.5.31)

(51) Int.Cl. ⁷	識別記号	F I	テマコード* (参考)
G 1 1 B 5/39		G 1 1 B 5/39	2 G 0 1 7
G 0 1 R 33/09		H 0 1 F 10/32	5 D 0 3 4
H 0 1 F 10/32		H 0 1 L 43/08	Z 5 E 0 4 9
H 0 1 L 43/08		G 0 1 R 33/06	R

審査請求 未請求 請求項の数 9 O L (全 22 頁)

(21) 出願番号 特願2000-349106(P2000-349106)

(22) 出願日 平成12年11月16日 (2000.11.16)

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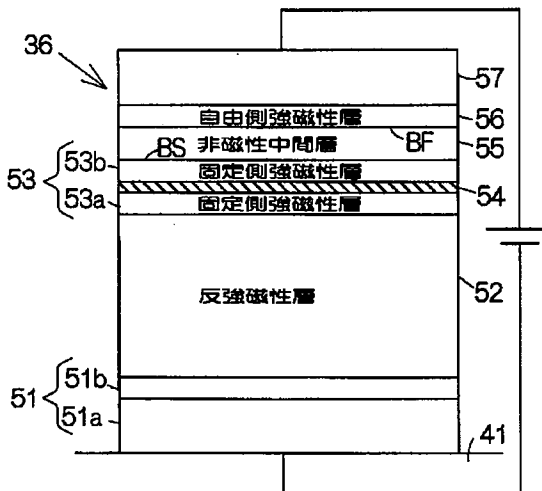
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(54) 【発明の名称】 CPP構造スピバルブヘッド

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 少ない積層数で確実に大きな抵抗変化量を得ることができるCPP構造スピバルブヘッドを提供する。

【解決手段】 CPP構造スピバルブヘッド36では、センス電流は絶縁層54を突き抜ける。絶縁層54に形成される微細な欠陥すなわちピンホールの働きで絶縁層54をまたぐ電子の移動は実現されると考えられる。ピンホールに電流は集中する。その結果、こういったスピバルブヘッド36では、電流の通過断面が縮小される際と同様に、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向の反転に応じて大きな抵抗変化量が実現されることができる。こういったCPP構造スピバルブヘッド36は磁気記録の一層の高密度化に大いに貢献することができる。このスピバルブヘッド36では、いわゆるトンネル接合磁気抵抗効果素子に比べて抵抗値は低減される。サーマルノイズの発生は抑制される。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、固定側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項2】 請求項1に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含むことを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項3】 請求項2に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記化合物は酸化物であることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項4】 請求項1に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は1対の固定側強磁性層で挟み込まれることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項5】 自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、自由側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項6】 請求項5に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含むことを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項7】 請求項6に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記化合物は酸化物であることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項8】 請求項5に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は1対の自由側強磁性層で挟み込まれることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【請求項9】 請求項5に記載のC P P構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記固定側強磁性層で前記非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層をさらに備えることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッド。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層とを備えるスピバルブ膜に関し、特に、こういったスピバルブ膜内で第1および第2境界面の鉛直方向に沿ってセンス電流を流通させるC P P (current perpendicular to the plane) 構造スピバルブヘッドに関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】C P P構造磁気抵抗効果ヘッドでは、積層されるG M R (巨大磁気抵抗効果) 膜の積層数が増加

すればするほど、大きな抵抗変化量が得られる。周知の通り、抵抗変化量が大きければ、小さな電流値のセンス電流で2値の磁気情報は正確に読み取られることができる。特に、こういったC P P構造磁気抵抗効果ヘッドでは、コア幅の縮小に拘わらず大きな抵抗変化量は維持されることができる。C P P構造磁気抵抗効果ヘッドは磁気記録の一層の高密度化に大いに貢献すると考えられる。

【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、こうして多数のG M R膜が積層されると、コア幅の縮小に伴い記録トラック密度は向上されることができても、線密度の向上すなわちビット長の短縮化は妨げられてしまう。磁気記録の高密度化は期待されるとおりに達成されることはできない。しかも、こういったC P P構造磁気抵抗効果ヘッドでは、自由側強磁性層の磁区を制御することが難しい。

【0004】本発明は、上記実状に鑑みてなされたもので、少ない積層数で確実に大きな抵抗変化量を得ることができるC P P構造スピバルブヘッドを提供することを目的とする。

【0005】

【課題を解決するための手段】上記目的を達成するため、第1発明によれば、自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、固定側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッドが提供される。

【0006】また、第2発明によれば、自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、自由側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするC P P構造スピバルブヘッドが提供される。

【0007】こういったC P P構造スピバルブヘッドでは、外部から作用する磁界の向きに応じて自由側強磁性層の磁化方向は回転する。こうして自由側強磁性層の磁化方向が回転すると、スピバルブヘッドの電気抵抗は大きく変化する。第1境界面や第2境界面の鉛直方向に沿ってセンス電流が流通すると、電気抵抗の変化に応じてセンス電流にはレベルの変化(例えば電圧変化)が出現する。

【0008】このとき、スピバルブヘッドではセンス電流は絶縁層を突き抜ける。絶縁層に形成される微細な欠陥すなわちピンホールの働きで絶縁層をまたぐ電子の移動は実現されると考えられる。ピンホールに電流は集中する。その結果、こういったスピバルブヘッドでは、電流の通過断面が縮小される際と同様に、自由側強磁性層で確立される磁化方向の反転に応じて大きな抵抗

変化量が実現されることができる。こういったCPP構造スピバルブヘッドは磁気記録の一層の高密度化に大いに貢献することができる。しかも、こういったスピバルブヘッドでは、いわゆるトンネル接合磁気抵抗効果(TMR)素子に比べて抵抗値は例えば1/10程度といった具合に低減される。いわゆるサーマルノイズの発生は抑制されることができる。ただし、センス電流は少なくとも鉛直方向成分を備えればよい。

【0009】絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含めばよい。このとき、化合物には、酸化物のほか、窒化物や炭化物、硼化物が含まれることができる。例えば絶縁層は1対の固定側強磁性層や1対の自由側強磁性層で挟み込まれてもよい。絶縁層の形成にあたっては、例えばスパッタリング法に基づく化合物の堆積が用いられてもよい。その他、固定側強磁性層や自由側強磁性層の表面に酸素や窒素といった反応性元素が結びつけられれば、絶縁層は形成されることができる。

【0010】さらに、第3発明によれば、自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、固定側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる第1絶縁層と、自由側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる第2絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッドが提供される。

【0011】こういったCPP構造スピバルブヘッドによれば、前述と同様に、絶縁層に形成される微細な欠陥すなわちピンホールの働きでピンホールに電流は集中する。その結果、こういったスピバルブヘッドでは、電流の通過断面が縮小される際と同様に、自由側強磁性層で確立される磁化方向の反転に応じて大きな抵抗変化量が実現されることができる。しかも、このスピバルブヘッドでは、1対の絶縁層の間でいわゆるスペキュラー散乱が達成されると考えられる。その結果、自由側強磁性層で確立される磁化方向に応じてさらに大きな抵抗変化量は実現されることができる。

【0012】なお、こういったCPP構造スピバルブヘッドは、例えばハードディスク駆動装置(HDD)といった磁気記録媒体駆動装置に組み込まれて使用されればよい。

【0013】

【発明の実施の形態】以下、添付図面を参照しつつ本発明の一実施形態を説明する。

【0014】図1は磁気記録媒体駆動装置の一具体例すなわちハードディスク駆動装置(HDD)11の内部構造を概略的に示す。このHDD11は、例えば平たい直方体の内部空間を区画する箱形の筐体本体12を備える。収容空間には、記録媒体としての1枚以上の磁気ディスク13が収容される。磁気ディスク13はスピンドルモータ14の回転軸に装着される。スピンドルモータ14は、例えば7200rpmや10000rpmとい

った高速度で磁気ディスク13を回転させることができる。筐体本体12には、筐体本体12との間で収容空間を密閉する蓋体すなわちカバー(図示せず)が結合される。

【0015】収容空間には、垂直方向に延びる支軸15回りで揺動するキャリッジ16がさらに収容される。このキャリッジ16は、支軸15から水平方向に延びる剛体の揺動アーム17と、この揺動アーム17の先端に取り付けられて揺動アーム17から前方に延びる弾性サスペンション18とを備える。周知の通り、弾性サスペンション18の先端では、いわゆるジンバルばね(図示せず)の働きで浮上ヘッドスライダ19は片持ち支持される。浮上ヘッドスライダ19には、磁気ディスク13の表面に向かって弾性サスペンション18から押し付け力が作用する。磁気ディスク13の回転に基づき磁気ディスク13の表面で生成される気流の働きで浮上ヘッドスライダ19には浮力が作用する。弾性サスペンション18の押し付け力と浮力とのバランスで磁気ディスク13の回転中に比較的の高い剛性で浮上ヘッドスライダ19は浮上し続けることができる。

【0016】こうした浮上ヘッドスライダ19の浮上中に、キャリッジ16が支軸15回りで揺動すると、浮上ヘッドスライダ19は半径方向に磁気ディスク13の表面を横切ることができる。こうした移動に基づき浮上ヘッドスライダ19は磁気ディスク13上の所望の記録トラックに位置決めされる。このとき、キャリッジ16の揺動は例えばボイスコイルモータ(VCM)といったアクチュエータ21の働きを通じて実現されればよい。周知の通り、複数枚の磁気ディスク13が筐体本体12内に組み込まれる場合には、隣接する磁気ディスク13同士の間で1本の揺動アーム17に対して2つの弾性サスペンション18が搭載される。

【0017】図2は浮上ヘッドスライダ19の一具体例を示す。この浮上ヘッドスライダ19は、平たい直方体に形成される Al_2O_3-TiC (アルチック)製のスライダ本体22と、このスライダ本体22の空気流出口に接合されて、読み出し書き込みヘッド23を内蔵する Al_2O_3 (アルミナ)製のヘッド素子内蔵膜24とを備える。スライダ本体22およびヘッド素子内蔵膜24には、磁気ディスク13に対向する媒体対向面すなわち浮上面25が規定される。磁気ディスク13の回転に基づき生成される気流26は浮上面25に受け止められる。

【0018】浮上面25には、空気流入端から空気流出口端に向かって延びる2筋のレール27が形成される。各レール27の頂上面にはいわゆるABS(空気軸受け面)28が規定される。ABS28では気流26の働きに応じて前述の浮力が生成される。ヘッド素子内蔵膜24に埋め込まれた読み出し書き込みヘッド23は、後述されるように、ABS28で露出する。なお、浮上ヘッ

ドスライダ19の形態はこういった形態に限られるものではない。

【0019】図3は浮上面25の様子を詳細に示す。読み出し書き込みヘッド23は、磁気ディスク13から作用する磁界に応じて変化する抵抗に基づき2値情報を読み取るCPP構造スピンバルブヘッド素子30と、導電コイルパターン（図示せず）で生じられる磁界を利用して磁気ディスク13に2値情報を書き込む誘導書き込みヘッド素子31とを備える。スピンバルブヘッド素子30は、例えばFeNやNiFeといった材料から構成される下部シールド層32の表面に形成される。下部シールド層32は、例えば、前述のヘッド素子内蔵膜24の下側半層を構成するAl₂O₃（アルミナ）膜33の表面に広がる。スピンバルブヘッド素子30は、下部シールド層32の表面に積層されるAl₂O₃（アルミナ）膜といった非磁性層34に埋め込まれる。

【0020】スピンバルブヘッド素子30は、基礎層すなわち下部シールド層32の表面に沿って広がる下側電極端子層35を備える。この下側電極端子層35は、例えばAuやCuといった導電性金属材料から形成されればよい。下側電極端子層35の表面にはスピンバルブ膜36が積層される。スピンバルブ膜36の詳細は後述される。

【0021】このスピンバルブ膜36は、同様に基礎層すなわち下部シールド層32の表面に沿って広がる1対の磁区制御膜37に挟み込まれる。磁区制御膜37は例えばCoCrPtから構成されればよい。この磁区制御膜37は、周知の通り、スピンバルブ膜36を横切る1方向に沿って磁化方向を規定することができる。この磁区制御膜37の働きで、スピンバルブ膜36内では自由側強磁性層（freelayer）の単磁区化は実現される。スピンバルブ膜36および磁区制御膜37は、下側電極端子層35の表面に積層される絶縁層38に埋め込まれる。絶縁層38は例えばAl₂O₃膜やSiO₂膜から構成されればよい。

【0022】絶縁層38の表面には上部シールド層39が広がる。この上部シールド層39は、下部シールド層32との間にスピンバルブ膜36を挟み込む。上部シールド層39は例えばNiFeから構成されればよい。スピンバルブ膜36の表面には、絶縁層38の合間から延びる上部シールド層39が受け止められる。すなわち、こうしてスピンバルブ膜36に接触する上部シールド層39はスピンバルブヘッド素子30の上側電極端子層として機能する。この上部シールド層39および下側電極端子層35の働きでスピンバルブ膜36にはセンス電流が供給されることができる。上部シールド層39と磁区制御膜37とは絶縁層38の働きで相互に隔離される。

【0023】以上のような上部シールド層39は同時に誘導書き込みヘッド素子31の下部磁極層として機能する。すなわち、上部シールド層39の表面には非磁性ギ

ャップ層40が配置される。非磁性ギャップ層40は例えばAl₂O₃（アルミナ）で構成されればよい。上部シールド層39には、この非磁性ギャップ層40を挟んで上部磁極層41が向き合う。上部磁極層41は例えばNiFeから構成されればよい。周知の通り、導電コイルパターンで磁界が生じられると、非磁性ギャップ層40の働きで、上部磁極層41と上部シールド層39とを行き交う磁束流は浮上面25から漏れ出る。こうして漏れ出る磁束流によって記録磁界（ギャップ磁界）は形成される。

【0024】上部磁極層41は、非磁性ギャップ層40の表面に沿って広がるAl₂O₃（アルミナ）膜42に覆われる。このAl₂O₃膜42は前述のヘッド素子内蔵膜24の上側半層を構成する。すなわち、Al₂O₃膜42は前述のAl₂O₃膜33と協働してヘッド素子内蔵膜24を構成する。

【0025】ここで、本発明の第1実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36の構造を詳細に説明する。このスピンバルブ膜36は、図4に示されるように、逆積層構造のシングルスピンバルブ膜に構成される。すなわち、スピンバルブ膜36は、下側電極端子層35の表面に広がる下地層51を備える。この下地層51は、例えば下側電極端子層35の表面に広がる膜厚5.0nm程度のTa層51aと、このTa層51aの表面に広がる膜厚2.0nm程度のNiFe層51bとで構成されればよい。下地層51の表面には、例えば膜厚15.0nm程度のPdPtMn層で構成される反強磁性層（pinning layer）52が重ね合わせられる。

【0026】反強磁性層52の表面には固定側強磁性層（pinned layer）53が積層される。この固定側強磁性層53は、反強磁性層52の表面に広がって、例えば表面で絶縁層54を受け止める第1強磁性層53aと、絶縁層54の表面に積層されて、第1強磁性層53aとの間に絶縁層54を挟み込む第2強磁性層53bとを備える。絶縁層54は例えば第1強磁性層53aの酸化物膜で形成されればよい。第1強磁性層53aや第2強磁性層53bは例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。

【0027】固定側強磁性層53の表面には、例えば膜厚2.8nm程度のCuで構成される非磁性中間層55や、例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成される自由側強磁性層（free layer）56が順番に積層される。自由側強磁性層56の表面には例えば膜厚5.0nm程度のTa層57が積層される。Ta層57の表面には、例えば膜厚10.0nm程度のCu層や膜厚10.0nm程度のAu層といったキャップ層（図示せず）が順番に形成されてもよい。

【0028】こういったスピンバルブ膜36では、相互に重ね合わせられる自由側強磁性層56と非磁性中間層55との間に第1境界面BFは規定される。同様に、相

互に重ね合わせられる固定側強磁性層53と非磁性中間層55との間に第2境界面B5は規定される。絶縁層54は、固定側強磁性層53中の第2強磁性層53bの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。

【0029】磁気情報の読み出しにあたってスピバルブヘッド素子30が磁気ディスク13の表面に向き合わせられると、スピバルブ膜36では、周知の通り、磁気ディスク13から作用する磁界の向きに応じて自由側強磁性層56の磁化方向は回転する。こうして自由側強磁性層56の磁化方向が回転すると、スピバルブ膜36の電気抵抗は大きく変化する。したがって、上側シールド層39および下側電極端子層35からスピバルブ膜36にセンス電流が供給されると、電気抵抗の変化に応じて上側シールド層39および下側電極端子層35から取り出される電気信号のレベルは変化する。このレベルの変化に応じて2値情報は読み取られることができる。

【0030】このとき、スピバルブヘッド素子30では、上側シールド層39および下側電極端子層35の間を流れる電流は絶縁層54を突き抜ける。図5に示されるように、絶縁層54に形成される微細な欠陥すなわちピンホール58の働きで絶縁層54をまたぐ電子の移動は実現されると考えられる。ピンホール58に電流は集中する。その結果、こういったスピバルブヘッド素子30では、電流の通過断面が縮小される際と同様に、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向の反転に応じて大きな抵抗変化量が実現されるることができる。小さな電流値のセンス電流で十分なレベルの変化すなわち電圧変化は検出されるることができる。したがって、こういったCPP構造スピバルブヘッド素子30は磁気記録の一層の高密度化や消費電力の低減に大いに貢献することができる。しかも、こういったスピバルブヘッド素子30では、いわゆるトンネル接合磁気抵抗効果(TMR)素子に比べて抵抗値は例えば1/10程度といった具合に低減される。いわゆるサーマルノイズの発生は抑制されるることができる。しかも、こういったスピバルブヘッド素子30では、スピバルブ膜36を挟み込む1対の磁区制御膜37の働きで比較的簡単に自由側強磁性層56の磁区は制御されるることができる。

【0031】次にスピバルブヘッド素子30の製造方法を簡単に説明する。周知の通り、アルチック製ウェハー(図示せず)の表面にはAl₂O₃膜33が成膜される。このAl₂O₃膜33上で下部シールド層32は積層形成される。続いて、下部シールド層32すなわち基礎層の表面には、図6に示されるように、膜厚10.0nm程度のAu膜61が積層形成される。この積層にあたって例えばスパッタリング法が用いられればよい。Au膜61は下側電極端子層35の形状に象られる。続いてAu膜61の表面には、スピバルブ膜36と同一の層構造で構成される第1素材膜62が積層される。この

第1素材膜62の形成工程の詳細は後述される。

【0032】図6に示されるように、続いて第1素材膜62上には、規定の削り出し形状に象られたレジスト膜63が形成される。例えばイオンミリング処理が実施されると、図7に示されるように、レジスト膜63の周囲で第1素材膜63は削り取られる。こうして第1素材膜62は、規定の形状に象られた第2素材膜64に削り出される。Au膜61の表面には、削り出された第2素材膜64を挟み込むCoCrPt層65が積層される。レジスト膜63はCoCrPt層65の積層後に除去されればよい。こうして規定の形状に積層形成された第2素材膜64およびCoCrPt層65は、周知の通り、第2素材膜64を横切る1直線に沿って延びる長尺素材66に削り出される。

【0033】図8に示されるように、続いてAu膜61上には絶縁材膜67が積層形成される。絶縁材膜67は長尺素材66に完全に覆い被さる。絶縁材膜67の表面にはレジスト膜68が形成される。例えばRIE(リアクティブイオンエッチング)処理が実施されると、図9に示されるように、レジスト膜68の周囲で絶縁材膜67は削り取られる。こうして絶縁層38は絶縁材膜67から削り出される。絶縁層38の合間でスピバルブ膜36の表面は露出する。その後、レジスト膜68は除去される。

【0034】図10に示されるように、絶縁層38上にはNiFe層69がさらに積層される。この積層にあたって例えばスパッタリング法が用いられればよい。このNiFe層69の表面にはレジスト膜71が形成される。このレジスト膜71は上部シールド層39の形状を象る。例えばRIE処理が実施されると、図11に示されるように、レジスト膜71の周囲でNiFe層69は削り取られる。こうして上部シールド層39は削り出される。その後、レジスト膜71は除去される。

【0035】こうして下側電極端子層35、スピバルブ膜36、磁区制御膜37、絶縁層38および上部シールド層39が形成されると、下部シールド層32の表面にはAl₂O₃膜34が成膜される。下側電極端子層35、スピバルブ膜36、磁区制御膜37、絶縁層38および上部シールド層39はAl₂O₃膜34に埋め込まれる(例えば図3参照)。こうしたAl₂O₃膜34上に、周知の通り、誘導書き込みヘッド素子31の非磁性ギャップ層40や上部磁極層41は順番に積層形成されていく。こういった積層に先立ってAl₂O₃膜34には平坦化研磨処理が実施されてもよい。この平坦化研磨処理が実施されると、上部シールド層39の表面はAl₂O₃膜34の合間で露出することができる。

【0036】素材膜63の形成にあたって、下側電極端子層35の表面には、例えば図12に示されるように、膜厚5.0nm程度のTa層71、膜厚2.0nm程度のNiFe層72、膜厚15.0nm程度のPdPtM

n層73および膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層74が順番に積層形成される。こういった積層にあたっては真空チャンバ内で例えばスパッタリング法が実施されればよい。CoFeB層74の積層後にチャンバ内には例えば酸素ガスが導入される。その結果、CoFeB層74の表面は酸化する。この酸化反応でCoFeB層74の表面には酸化物膜が形成される。その後、酸化物膜上には、膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層、膜厚2.8nm程度のCu層、膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層および膜厚5.0nm程度のTa層が相次いで積層形成される。Ta層の表面には、さらに、膜厚10.0nm程度のCu層や膜厚10.0nm程度のAu層が積層形成されてもよい。

【0037】こういったスピバルブヘッド素子30の製造方法では、スピバルブ膜36内に絶縁層54を形成するにあたって、既存のスピバルブ膜の形成過程でチャンバ内に酸素ガスが導入されればよい。既存の製造方法を流用しつつ比較的簡単に絶縁層54の形成は実現されることができる。ただし、酸素ガスの導入に代えて酸素プラズマが用いられてもよい。

【0038】以上のようなスピバルブ膜36は、例えば図13に示されるように、順積層構造のシングルスピバルブ膜に構成されてもよい。すなわち、このスピバルブ膜36では、下地層51の表面に、自由側強磁性層56、非磁性中間層55、固定側強磁性層53、反強磁性層52およびTa層57が相次いで重ね合わせられる。前述と同様に、自由側強磁性層56と非磁性中間層55との間には第1境界面BFが規定される。固定側強磁性層53と非磁性中間層55との間には第2境界面BSが規定される。固定側強磁性層53では第1および第2強磁性層53a、53bの間に絶縁層54は挟み込まれる。絶縁層54は第1強磁性層53aの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。こういった絶縁層54は、前述と同様に、第1強磁性層53aの表面に形成される酸化物膜で構成されればよい。

【0039】図14は本発明の第2実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36aの構造を示す。このスピバルブ膜36aでは、固定側強磁性層53に積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる。この積層フェリ構造膜は、反強磁性層52の表面に広がる第1強磁性層75aと、この第1強磁性層75aとの間に例えば膜厚0.8nm程度のRu層76を挟み込む第2強磁性層75bとを備える。第2強磁性層75bの表面には前述と同様に絶縁層54が形成される。絶縁層54の表面には第3強磁性層75cがさらに積層される。こうして絶縁層54は第3強磁性層75cの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。このとき、各強磁性層75a～75cは例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。こうした積層フェリ構造膜の採用によれば、固定側強磁性

層53の磁化方向が強固に固定される結果、前述のスピバルブ膜36に比べてさらに大きな抵抗変化量は実現されることができる。その他、前述と同様な作用や機能を実現する構成には同一の参照符号が付与される。重複する説明は割愛される。

【0040】図15は本発明の第3実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36bの構造を示す。このスピバルブ膜36bでは、自由側強磁性層56とTa層57との間に絶縁層54bは挟み込まれる。こういった絶縁層54bは例えば酸化物膜で構成されればよい。絶縁層54bは自由側強磁性層56の介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。このとき、固定側強磁性層53や自由側強磁性層56の膜厚は各々例えば2.0nm程度に設定されればよい。こうしたスピバルブ膜36bによれば、前述のスピバルブ膜36、36aと同様に、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向に応じて大きな抵抗変化量は実現されることができる。

【0041】酸化物膜は、例えば自由側強磁性層56の表面に積層形成される膜厚2.0nm程度のFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層で構成されればよい。こういった積層形成には例えばスパッタリング法が用いられればよい。その他、酸化物膜の形成にあたっては、前述と同様に、自由側強磁性層56の成膜後にチャンバ内に酸素ガスが導入されてもよく、チャンバ内に酸素プラズマが導入されてもよい。こういった酸素ガスや酸素プラズマは例えば自由側強磁性層56の表面で酸化反応を引き起こす。その結果、自由側強磁性層56の表面には酸化物膜が形成される。こういった場合には、酸素ガスや酸素プラズマの導入に先立って、自由側強磁性層56の表面に例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCu層および膜厚1.0nm程度のTa層といった被酸化層が成膜されてもよい。

【0042】この第3実施形態では、前述のスピバルブ膜36aと同様に、固定側強磁性層53に積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる。この積層フェリ構造膜は、反強磁性層52の表面に広がる第1強磁性層75dと、この第1強磁性層75dとの間に例えば膜厚0.8nm程度のRu層76を挟み込む第2強磁性層75eとを備える。第1強磁性層75dは例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。その一方で、第2強磁性層75eは例えば膜厚2.5nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。こうした積層フェリ構造膜の採用によれば、固定側強磁性層53の磁化方向が強固に固定される結果、固定側強磁性層53に単純にCoFeB層が採用される場合に比べて大きな抵抗変化量は実現されることができる。ただし、固定側強磁性層53には必ずしも積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる必要はない。その他、前述と同様な作用や機能を実現する構成には同一の参照符号が付与される。重複する説明は割愛される。

【0043】この第3実施形態では、図15から明らかなように、自由側強磁性層56と絶縁層54bとの間に

結合遮断層すなわちCu層77が挟み込まれてもよい。後述されるように、こういったCu層77は自由側強磁性層56の保磁力Hcを十分に弱めることができる。また、絶縁層54bは、例えば図16に示されるように、自由側強磁性層56中に形成されてもよい。こういった絶縁層54bは、例えば第1および第2強磁性層56a、56bに挟み込まれる酸化物膜で構成されればよい。絶縁層54bは第1強磁性層56aの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。このとき、第1および第2強磁性層56a、56bの膜厚は各々2.0nm程度に設定されればよい。固定側強磁性層53の膜厚は例えば2.0nm程度に設定されればよい。

【0044】図17は本発明の第4実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36cの構造を示す。このスピバルブ膜36cでは、前述のように固定側強磁性層53中に形成される絶縁層54に加えて、自由側強磁性層56とTa層57との間に絶縁層54cが挟み込まれる。前述と同様に、絶縁層54は固定側強磁性層53中の第3強磁性層79cの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。その一方で、絶縁層54cは自由側強磁性層56の介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。こうしたスピバルブ膜36cによれば、前述のスピバルブ膜36、36a、36bと同様に、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向に応じて大きな抵抗変化量は実現される。その他、前述と同様な作用や機能を実現する構成には同一の参照符号が付与される。重複する説明は割愛される。ただし、前述と同様に、固定側強磁性層53には必ずしも積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる必要はない。

【0045】絶縁層54cは、前述の絶縁層54bと同様に、例えば自由側強磁性層56の表面に積層形成される膜厚2.0nm程度のFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層で構成されればよい。こういった積層形成には例えばスパッタリング法が用いられればよい。その他、酸化物膜の形成にあたっては、前述と同様に、自由側強磁性層56の成膜後にチャンバ内に酸素ガスが導入されてもよく、チャンバ内に酸素プラズマが導入されてもよい。こういった酸素ガスや酸素プラズマは例えば自由側強磁性層56の表面で酸化反応を引き起こす。その結果、自由側強磁性層56の表面には酸化物膜が形成される。こういった場合には、酸素ガスや酸素プラズマの導入に先立って、自由側強磁性層56の表面に例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCu層および膜厚1.0nm程度のTa層といった被酸化層が成膜されてもよい。

【0046】特に、この第4実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36cでは、例えば図18に示されるように、1対の絶縁層54、54cの間でいわゆるスペキュラー散乱が実現されると考えられる。その結果、後述されるように、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向に応じてさらに大きな抵抗変化量は達成される。な

お、この第4実施形態では、例えば図19に示されるように、自由側強磁性層56と絶縁層54cとの間に前述の結合遮断層すなわちCu層77が挟み込まれてもよい。

【0047】図20は本発明の第5実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36dの構造を示す。このスピバルブ膜36dはいわゆるデュアルスピバルブ膜に構成される。すなわち、このスピバルブ膜36dでは、前述と同様に、下地層51、反強磁性層52、絶縁層54を挟み込む固定側強磁性層53、非磁性中間層55および自由側強磁性層56が順番に積み上げられる。絶縁層54は固定側強磁性層53中の第3強磁性層79cの介在で非磁性中間層55から隔てられることができる。

【0048】しかも、この自由側強磁性層56上には、非磁性中間層78、固定側強磁性層79、反強磁性層80およびTa層57が順番に重ね合わせられる。自由側強磁性層56と非磁性中間層78の間には、前述と同様に第1境界面BFが規定される。その一方で、固定側強磁性層79と非磁性中間層78の間には第2境界面BSが規定される。前述と同様な作用や機能を実現する構成には同一の参照符号が付与される。重複する説明は割愛される。

【0049】この第5実施形態では、前述と同様に、固定側強磁性層79に積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる。この積層フェリ構造膜は、非磁性中間層78の表面に広がって、例えば表面で絶縁層54dを受け止める第1強磁性層79aと、絶縁層54dの表面に積層されて、第1強磁性層79aとの間に絶縁層54dを挟み込む第2強磁性層79bとを備える。こうして絶縁層54dは第1強磁性層79aの介在で非磁性中間層78から隔てられることができる。このとき、絶縁層54dは例えば第1強磁性層79aの酸化物膜で形成されればよい。第2強磁性層79bの表面には例えば膜厚0.8nm程度のRu層76が積層される。Ru層76の表面には第3強磁性層79cがさらに積層される。各強磁性層79a~79cは例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。その他、非磁性中間層78や反強磁性層80は前述の非磁性中間層55や反強磁性層52と同様に構成されればよい。

【0050】こうしたスピバルブ膜36dによれば、前述のスピバルブ膜36、36a~36cと同様に、自由側強磁性層56で確立される磁化方向に応じて大きな抵抗変化量は実現される。ただし、前述と同様に、固定側強磁性層53、79には必ずしも積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる必要はない。

【0051】図21は本発明の第6実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36eの構造を示す。このスピバルブ膜36eでは、前述の第5実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜36dで自由側強磁性層56中にさらに絶縁層54eが形成される。こういった絶縁層54eは例えば酸化物膜で

【0059】このとき、固定側強磁性層83には積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる。この積層フェリ構造膜は、反強磁性層52の表面に広がる第1強磁性層75dと、この第1強磁性層75dとの間に例えば膜厚0.8nm程度のRu層76を挟み込む第2強磁性層75eとを備えればよい。第1強磁性層75dは例えば膜厚2.0nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。その一方で、第2強磁性層75eは例えば膜厚2.5nm程度のCoFeB層で構成されればよい。ただし、前述と同様に、固定側強磁性層83には必ずしも積層フェリ構造膜が用いられる必要はない。こうしたスピンバルブ膜36fによれば、前述のスピンバルブ膜36、36a~36eと同様に、自由側強磁性層56、85で確立される磁化方向に応じて大きな抵抗変化量は実現されることができ

【0060】以上のようなCPP構造スピンバルブヘッド素子30で抵抗変化量は実測された。この実測にあたって16種類のスピンバルブ膜は用意された。試料(a1)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には、図4に示されるように、前述の第1実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36が組み込まれた。試料(b1)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には、図14に示されるように、前述の第2実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36aが組み込まれた。

【0061】試料(c1)～(c4)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には前述の第3実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36bが組み込まれた。ただし、試料(c1)では、図15に示されるように、絶縁層54bの形成にあたって、自由側強磁性層56の表面にはスパッタリング法でFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。また、試料(c2)では、絶縁層54bの形成にあたって自由側強磁性層56の表面は酸素ガスに曝された。さらに、試料(c3)では、絶縁層54bの形成にあたって自由側強磁性層56の表面は酸素プラズマに曝された。いずれの場合にも自由側強磁性層56と絶縁層54bとの間にCu層77は挟み込まれなかった。さらにまた、試料(c4)では、図16に示されるように、絶縁層54bは自由側強磁性層56中に埋め込まれた。この絶縁層54bの形成にあたって、第1強磁性層56aの表面にはスパッタリング法でFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。

【0062】試料(d1)～(d4)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には前述の第4実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36cが組み込まれた。ただし、試料(d1)では、図17に示されるように、絶縁層54cの形成にあたって、自由側強磁性層56の表面にはスパッタリング法でFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。また、試料(d2)では、絶縁層54cの形成にあたって自由側強磁性層56の表面は酸素ガスに曝された。さらに、試料(d3)では、絶縁層54cの形成にあたって自由側強磁性層56の表面は酸素プラズマに曝された。いずれの場合にも自由側強磁性層56と絶縁層54cとの間にCu層77は挟み込まれなかった。さらにまた、試料(d4)では、図19に示されるように、自由側強磁性層56と絶縁層54cとの間に結合遮断層すなわちCu層77が挟み込まれた。このとき、絶縁層54cの形成にあたって、Cu層77上にはスパッタリング法でFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。

【0063】さらにまた、試料(e1)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には、図20に示されるように、前述の第5実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36dが組み込まれた。同様に、試料(f1)～(f4)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には前述の第6実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36eが組み込まれた。ただし、試料(f1)では、図21に示されるように、絶縁層54eの形成にあたって、強磁性層56aの表面にはスパッタリング法で

Fe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。また、試料(f2)では、絶縁層54eの形成にあたって強磁性層56aの表面は酸素ガスに曝された。さらに、試料(f3)では、絶縁層54eの形成にあたって強磁性層56aの表面は酸素プラズマに曝された。いずれの場合にも強磁性層56a、56bと絶縁層54eとの間にCu層77は挟み込まれなかった。さらにまた、試料(f4)では、図22に示されるように、各強磁性層56a、56bと絶縁層54eとの間に結合遮断層すなわちCu層77が挟み込まれた。このとき、絶縁層54eの形成にあたって、Cu層77上にはスパッタリング法でFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層が積層された。加えて、試料(g1)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子には、図23に示されるように、前述の第7実施形態に係るスピンバルブ膜36fが組み込まれた。

【0064】この実測では4種類の比較例が用意された。試料(a0)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子では前述の試料(a1)から絶縁層54が取り除かれた。固定側強磁性層53の膜厚は4.5nmに設定された。試料(b0)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子では前述の試料(b1)から絶縁層54が取り除かれた。このとき、非磁性中間層55に接触する強磁性層の膜厚は2.5μmに設定された。試料(e0)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子では前述の試料(e1)から絶縁層54、54dが取り除かれた。非磁性中間層55、78に接触する強磁性層の膜厚は各々2.5μmに設定された。さらに、試料(g0)に係るスピンバルブヘッド素子では前述の試料(g1)から絶縁層54f、54gが取り除かれた。こうした実測の結果、[表1]～[表4]が得られた。

【0065】

【表1】

試料名	(a0)	(a1)
抵抗変化量ΔR [mΩμm ²]	0.32	0.62

【0066】

【表2】

試料名	(b0)	(b1)				
抵抗変化量ΔR [mΩμm ²]	0.49	0.84				
試料名	(c1)	(c2)	(c3)	(c4)		
抵抗変化量ΔR [mΩμm ²]	23.81	0.86	15.92	23.62		
試料名	(d1)	(d2)	(d3)	(d4)		
抵抗変化量ΔR [mΩμm ²]	72.01	3.23	43.75	72.74		

【0067】

【表3】

試料名	(e0)	(e1)				
抵抗変化量 ΔR [m Ω μ m ²]	3.34	6.38				
試料名	(f1)	(f2)	(f3)	(f4)		
抵抗変化量 ΔR [m Ω μ m ²]	65.32	7.18	40.54	66.74		

【0068】

【表4】

試料名	(g0)	(g1)
抵抗変化量 ΔR [m Ω μ m ²]	2.26	29.26

【0069】【表1】～【表4】から明らかなように、絶縁層が除かれた試料(a0)、(b0)、(e0)および(g0)に比べて試料(a1)、(b1)、(c1)～(c4)、(e1)、(f1)～(f4)および(g1)では大幅に素子サイズ1.0 μ m²時の抵抗変化量 ΔR は増大した。その結果、絶縁層54、54b～54gの挿入に基づきスピバルブヘッド素子30の抵抗変化量 ΔR は増大することが確認された。特に、試料(c1)、(c4)、(d1)、(d4)、(f1)および(f4)のように、スパッタリング法を用いてFe₂O₃層およびAl₂O₃層といった酸化物膜が形成されたスピバルブヘッド素子30では、酸素ガスの導入や酸素プラズマに基づき酸化物膜が形成されたスピバルブヘッド素子に比べて著しく大きな抵抗変化量 ΔR は達成された。しかも、試料(d1)～(d4)および試料(f1)～(f4)から明らかなように、固定側強磁性層53、79中の強磁性層53b、79aで非磁性中間層55、78から隔てられた絶縁層54、54dと、自由側強磁性層56、56a、56bで非磁性中間層55、78から隔てられた絶縁層54c、54eとを同時に備えるスピバルブヘッド素子30では著しく抵抗変化量 ΔR が増大することが確認された。

【0070】さらに、発明者は前述の試料(b1)で酸化時間すなわち酸素ガスの導入持続時間と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素の導入量は0.2[sccm]に設定された。図24(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化時間が100[s]を超えると高い抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は実現されることが確認された。

【0071】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(c1)で絶縁層54bの膜厚と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。図25(a)および(b)に示されるように、絶縁層54bの膜厚が3.0nmに設定されると、抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0072】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(c2)で酸化時間すなわち酸素ガスの導入持続時間と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素の導入量は0.2[sccm]に設定された。図26(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化

時間が100[s]を超えると高い抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は実現されることが確認された。

【0073】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(c3)で酸化時間すなわち酸素プラズマの適用持続時間と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素圧は1.0[Pa]に設定された。図27(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化時間が300[s]を超えると高い抵抗変化量 ΔR は達成されることが確認された。酸化時間が300[s]に設定されると、MR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0074】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(d1)で絶縁層54cの膜厚と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。図28(a)および(b)に示されるように、絶縁層54cの膜厚が3.0nmに設定されると、抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0075】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(d2)で自由側強磁性層56の酸化時間すなわち酸素ガスの導入持続時間と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素の導入量は0.2[sccm]に設定された。図29(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化時間が100[s]を超えると高い抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は実現されることが確認された。

【0076】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(d3)で自由側強磁性層56の酸化時間すなわち酸素プラズマの適用持続時間と1 μ m²時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素圧は1.0[Pa]に設定された。図30(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化時間が300[s]を超えると高い抵抗変化量 ΔR は達成されることが確認された。酸化時間が300[s]に設定されると、MR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0077】さらに、発明者は前述の試料(d4)で結合遮断層すなわちCu層77の膜厚と抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。その結果、図31(a)から明らかなように、CPP構造スピバルブヘッド素子30では、Cu層77の膜厚に拘わらず一定の抵抗変化量 ΔR は達成されることが確認された。しかも、Cu層77の膜厚が1.0nmを超えると、自由側強磁性層56の保磁力H_cは著しく低下することが確認された。結合遮断層すなわちCu層77の効果は実証された。特に、Cu層77の膜厚は2.0nm以上に設定されることが望まれる。

【0078】その一方で、例えば図31(b)に示されるように、いわゆるCIP(current in the plane)構造スピバルブヘッド素子では、結合遮断層すなわちCu層の膜厚が増大するにつれて抵抗変化量 ΔR は減少してしまう。このCIP構造スピバルブヘッド素子では、周知の通り、例えば前述の下部

シールド層32上に積層される非磁性層の表面に沿って両側からスピバルブ膜36cを挟み込む1対の電極端子や磁区制御膜からスピバルブ膜36cに電流は供給された。

【0079】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(f1)で絶縁層54eの膜厚と $1\mu\text{m}^2$ 時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。図32(a)および(b)に示されるように、絶縁層54eの膜厚が3.0nmに設定されると、抵抗変化量 ΔR やMR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0080】さらにまた、発明者は前述の試料(f3)で強磁性層56aの酸化時間すなわち酸素プラズマの適用持続時間と $1\mu\text{m}^2$ 時の抵抗値Rや抵抗変化量 ΔR との関係を検証した。このとき、酸素圧は1.0[Pa]に設定された。図33(a)および(b)に示されるように、酸化時間が300[s]に設定されると、抵抗変化量 ΔR およびMR比は最大値を示すことが確認された。

【0081】なお、以上のような絶縁層54、54b～54gは、少なくとも2種類以上の元素からなる化合物を含めばよい。こういった化合物には、前述の酸化物のほか、窒化物や炭化物、硼化物が含まれることができる。

【0082】(付記1) 自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、固定側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0083】(付記2) 付記1に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含むことを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0084】(付記3) 付記2に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記化合物は酸化物であることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0085】(付記4) 付記1に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は1対の固定側強磁性層で挟み込まれることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0086】(付記5) 自由側強磁性層と、第1境界面で自由側強磁性層に接触する非磁性中間層と、第2境界面で非磁性中間層に接触する固定側強磁性層と、自由側強磁性層で非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層とを備えることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0087】(付記6) 付記5に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含むことを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0088】(付記7) 付記6に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記化合物は酸化物である

ことを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0089】(付記8) 付記5に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は1対の自由側強磁性層で挟み込まれることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0090】(付記9) 付記5に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記固定側強磁性層で前記非磁性中間層から隔てられる絶縁層をさらに備えることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0091】(付記10) 付記9に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は、少なくとも2種類の元素からなる化合物を含むことを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0092】(付記11) 付記10に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記化合物は酸化物であることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0093】(付記12) 付記9に記載のCPP構造スピバルブヘッドにおいて、前記絶縁層は1対の固定側強磁性層で挟み込まれることを特徴とするCPP構造スピバルブヘッド。

【0094】

【発明の効果】以上のように本発明によれば、既存のスピバルブ膜と同様な積層数で確実に大きな抵抗変化量は達成されることができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】 ハードディスク駆動装置(HDD)の構造を概略的に示す平面図である。

【図2】 一具体例に係る浮上ヘッドスライダの構造を概略的に示す拡大斜視図である。

【図3】 浮上面で観察される読み出し書き込みヘッドの様子を示す拡大正面図である。

【図4】 本発明の第1実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図5】 絶縁層の働きを示す概念図である。

【図6】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図7】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図8】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図9】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図10】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図11】 スピバルブヘッド素子の製造方法に含まれる1工程を示す部分断面図である。

【図12】 スピバルブ膜に組み込まれる絶縁層の形成工程を概略的に示す拡大断面図である。

【図13】 第1実施形態の一変形例に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図14】 本発明の第2実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図15】 本発明の第3実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図16】 第3実施形態の一変形例に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図17】 本発明の第4実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図18】 スペキュラー拡散の原理を示す概念図である。

【図19】 第4実施形態の一変形例に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図20】 本発明の第5実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図21】 本発明の第6実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図22】 第6実施形態の一変形例に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図23】 本発明の第7実施形態に係るスピバルブ膜の構造を示す拡大側面図である。

【図24】 試料(b1)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)酸素雰囲気下の酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)酸素雰囲気下の酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図25】 試料(c1)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)絶縁層の膜厚と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)絶縁層の膜厚とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図26】 試料(c2)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)酸素雰囲気下の酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)酸素雰囲気下の酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図27】 試料(c3)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)酸素プラズマに基づく酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)酸素プラズマに基づく酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図28】 試料(d1)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)自由側強磁性層上に形成される絶縁層の膜厚と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)同じく絶縁層の膜厚とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図29】 試料(d2)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)自由側強磁性層の酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)自由側強磁性層の酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図30】 試料(d3)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)酸素プラズマに基づく自由側強磁性層の酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)酸素プラズマに基づく自由側強磁性層の酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図31】 試料(d4)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、結合遮断層の膜厚と、抵抗変化量および自由側強磁性層の保磁力との関係を示すグラフである。

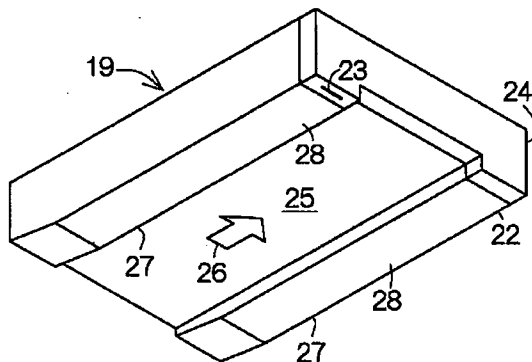
【図32】 試料(f1)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)自由側強磁性層上に形成される絶縁層の膜厚と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)同じく絶縁層の膜厚とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

【図33】 試料(f3)に係るスピバルブヘッド素子で、(a)酸素プラズマに基づく自由側強磁性層の酸化時間と抵抗値および抵抗変化量との関係、および(b)酸素プラズマに基づく自由側強磁性層の酸化時間とMR比との関係を示すグラフである。

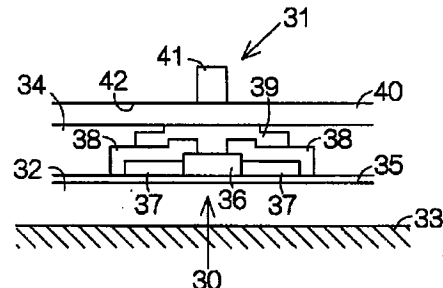
【符号の説明】

31 CPP構造スピバルブヘッド、36、36a～36h スピバルブ膜、53 固定側強磁性層、54、54b～54g 絶縁層、55 非磁性中間層、56 自由側強磁性層、78 非磁性中間層、79 固定側強磁性層、83 固定側強磁性層、84 非磁性中間層、85 自由側強磁性層、BF 第1境界面、BS 第2境界面。

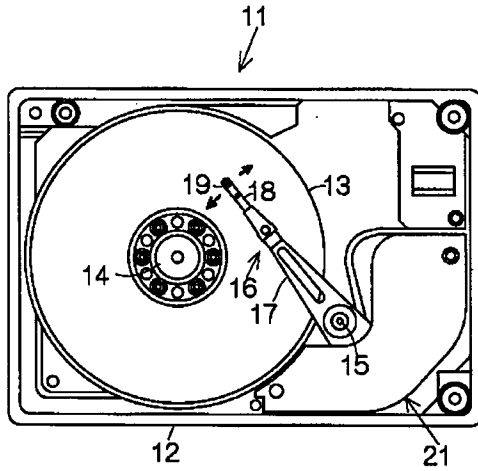
【図2】



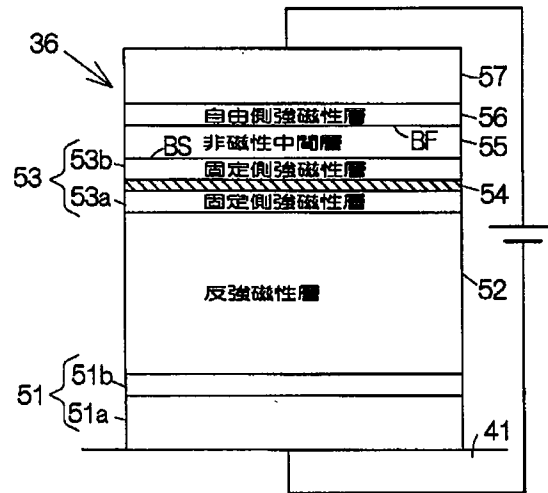
【図3】



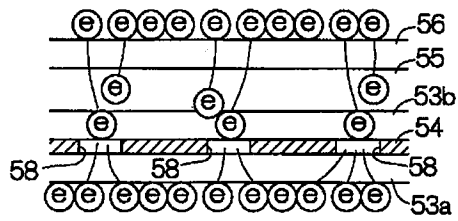
【図1】



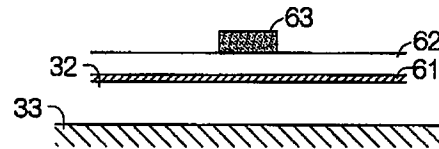
【図4】



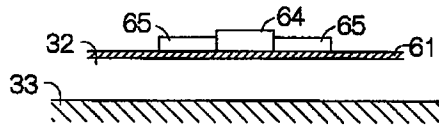
【図5】



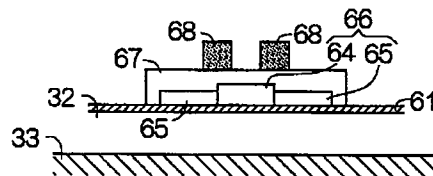
【図6】



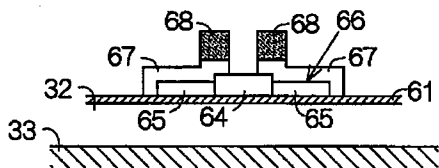
【図7】



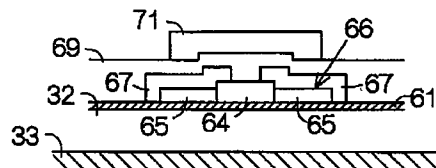
【図8】



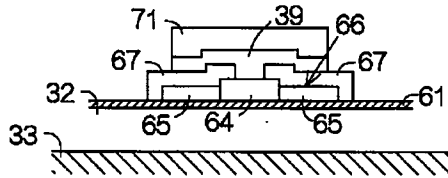
【図9】



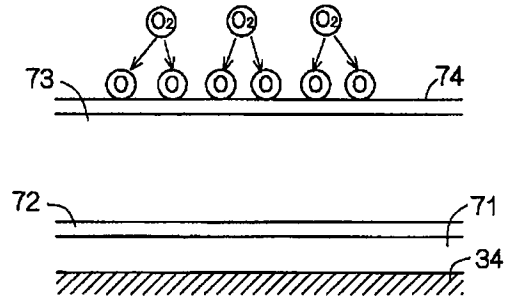
【図10】



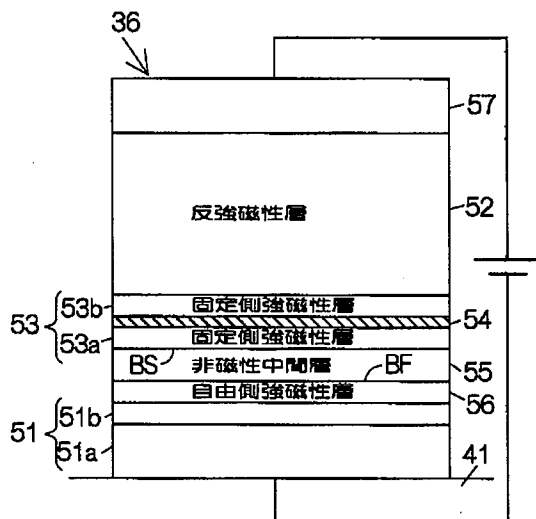
【圖 1 1】



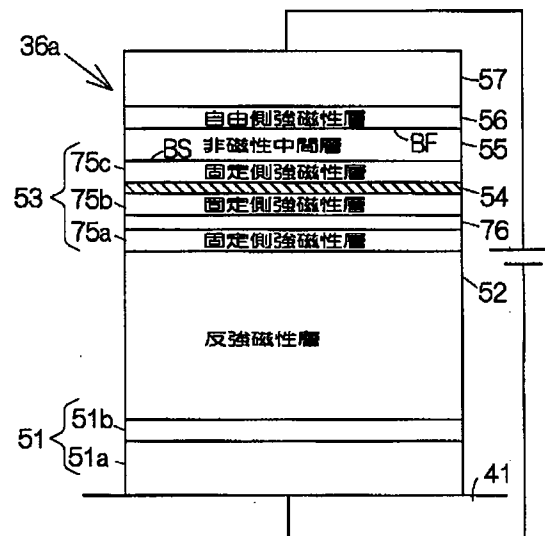
【图 1 2】



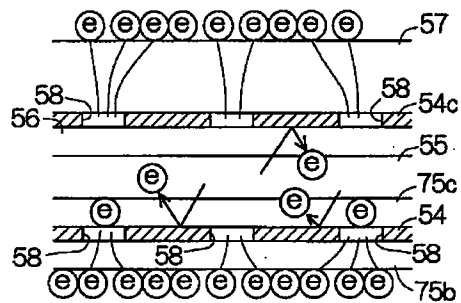
【圖 13】



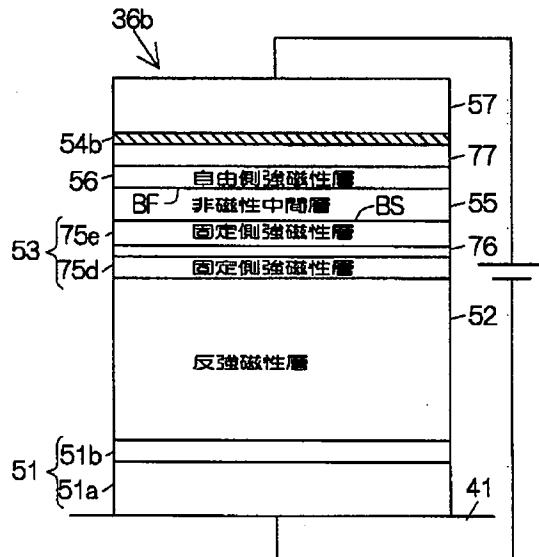
【図 14】



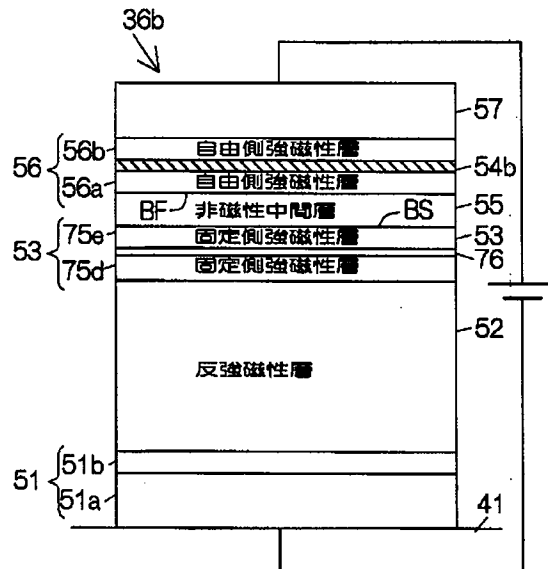
【図 18】



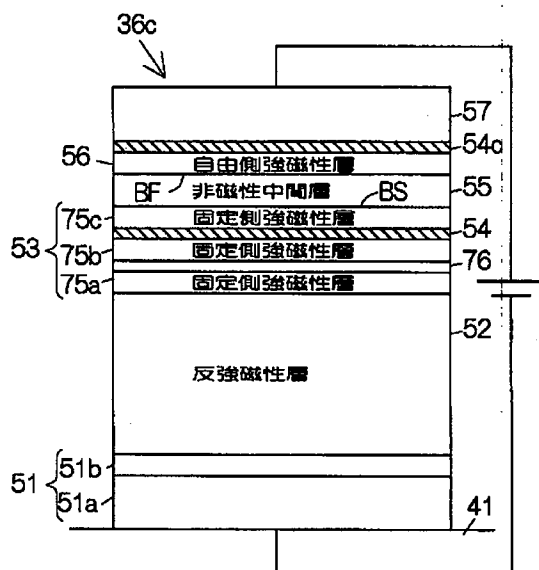
【図15】



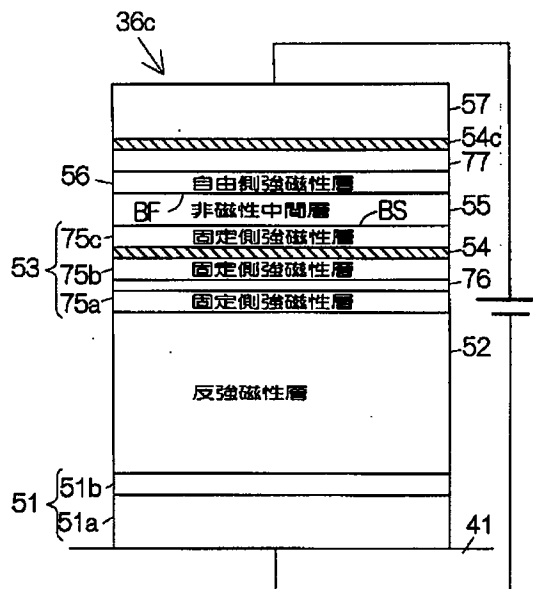
【図16】



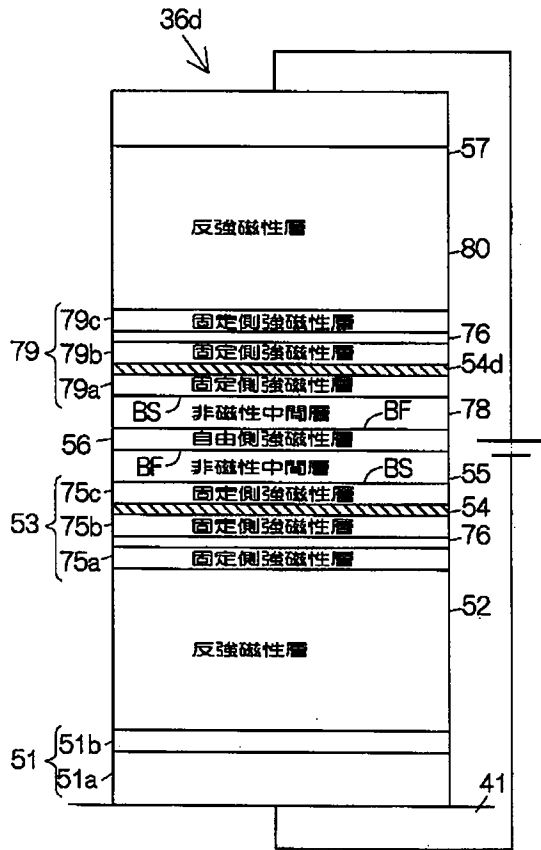
【図17】



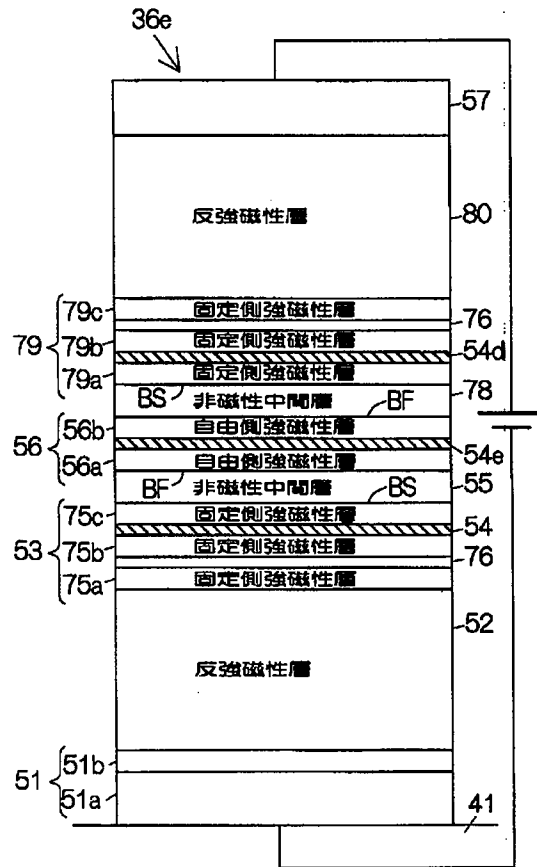
【図19】



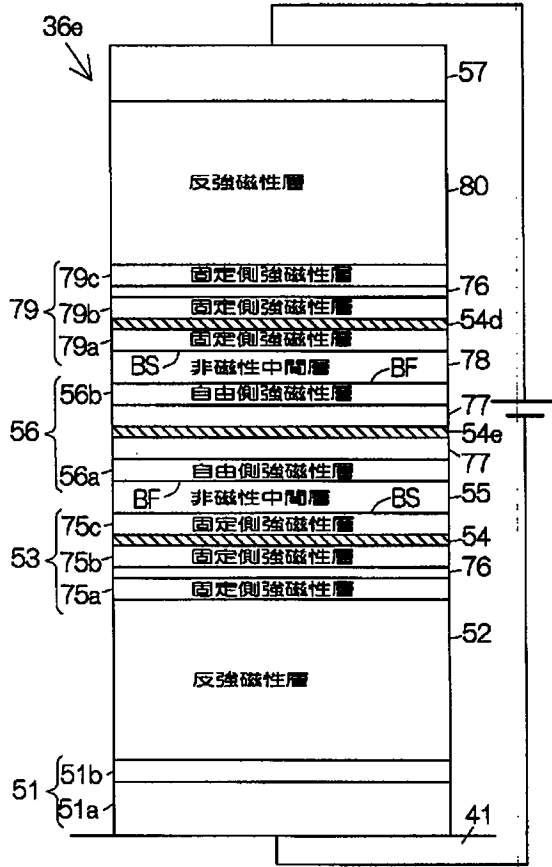
【図20】



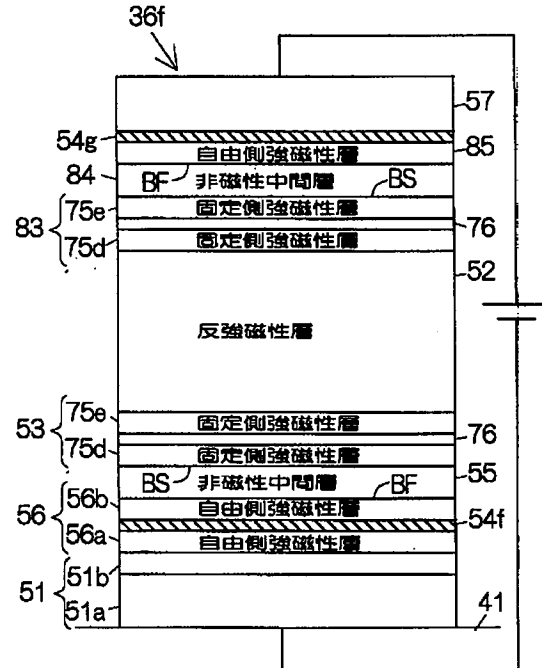
【図21】



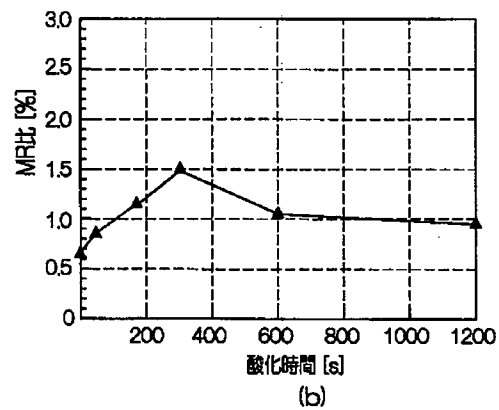
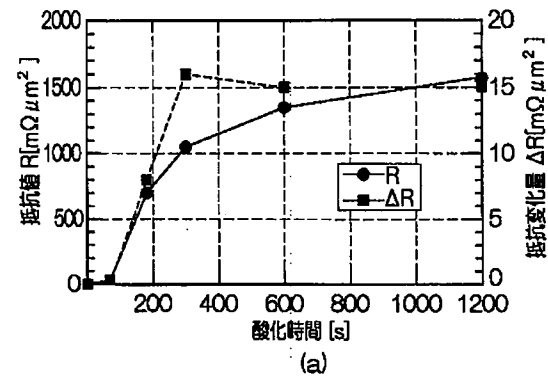
【図22】



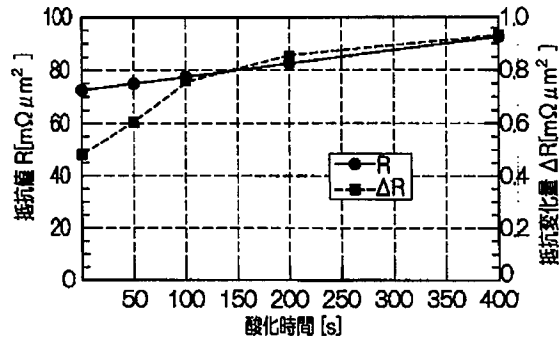
【図23】



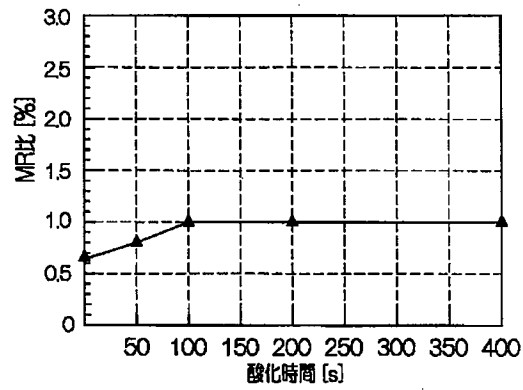
【図27】



【図24】

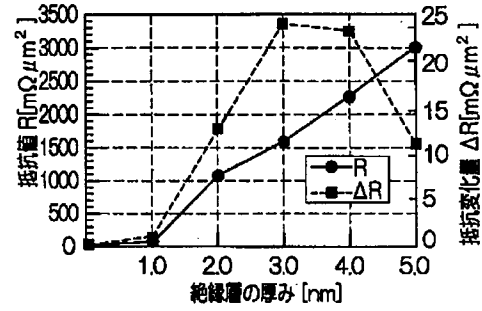


(a)

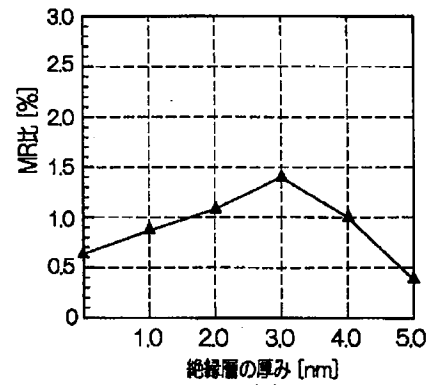


(b)

【図25】

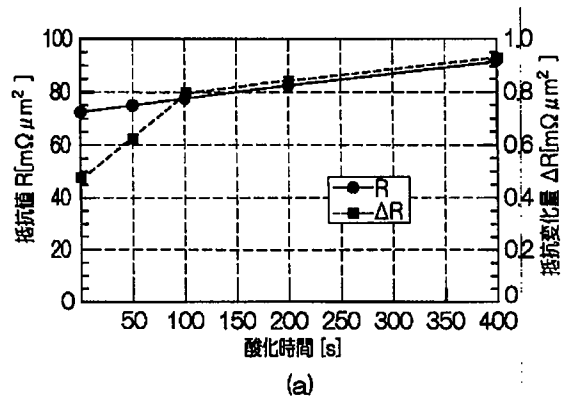


(a)

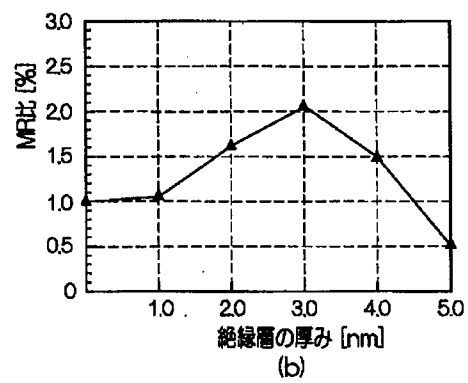
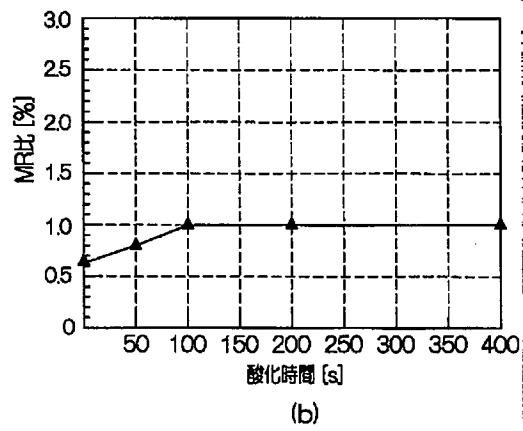
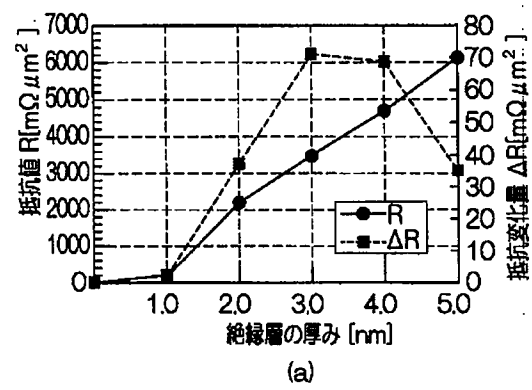


(b)

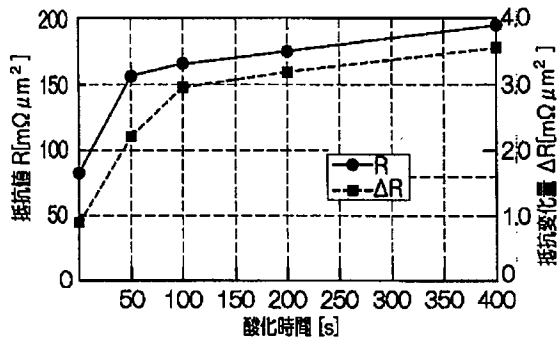
【図26】



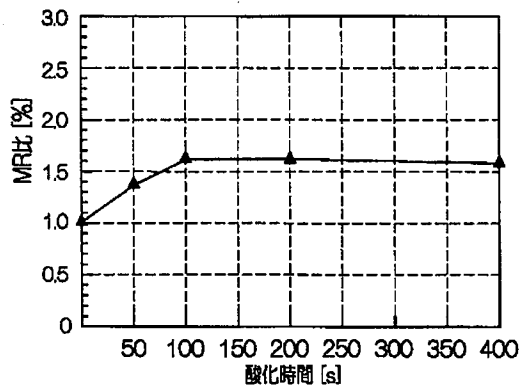
【図28】



【図29】

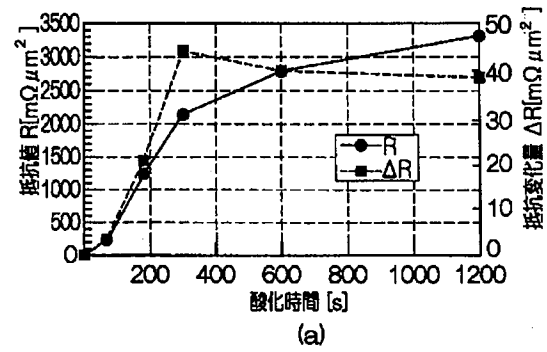


(a)

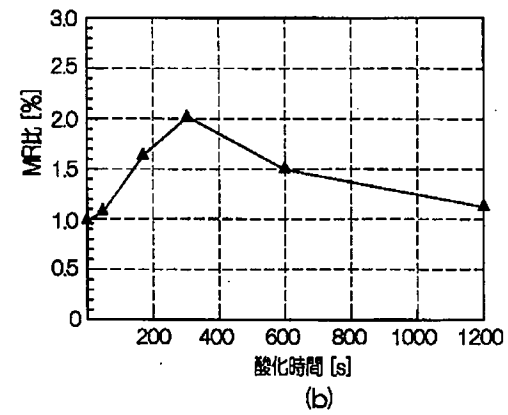


(b)

【図30】

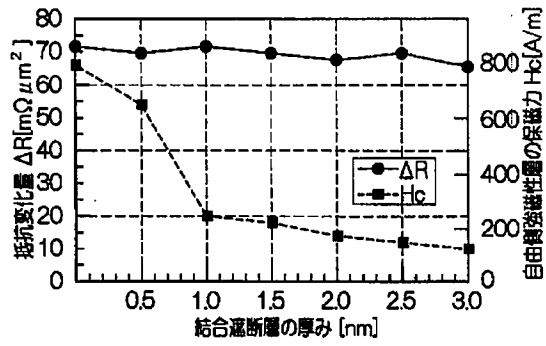


(a)

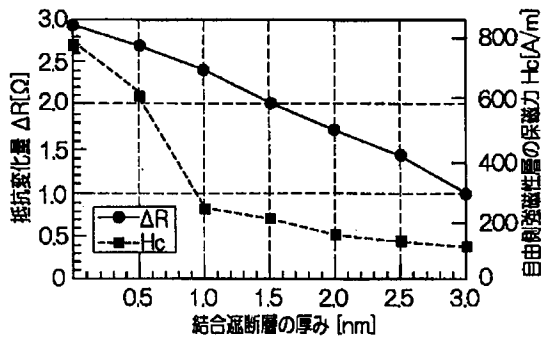


(b)

【図31】

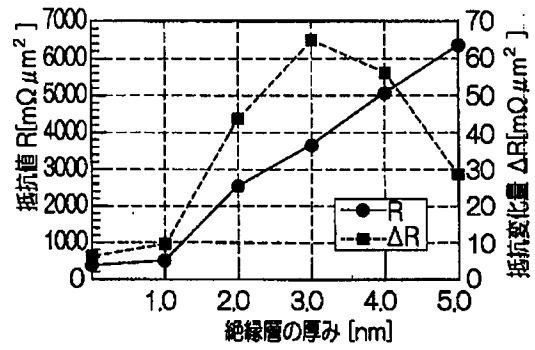


(a)

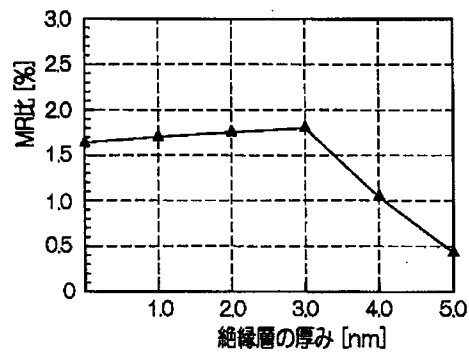


(b)

【図32】

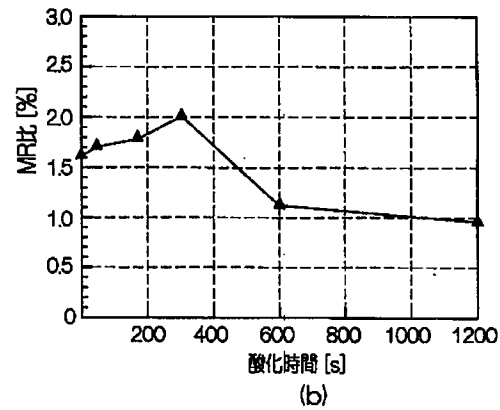
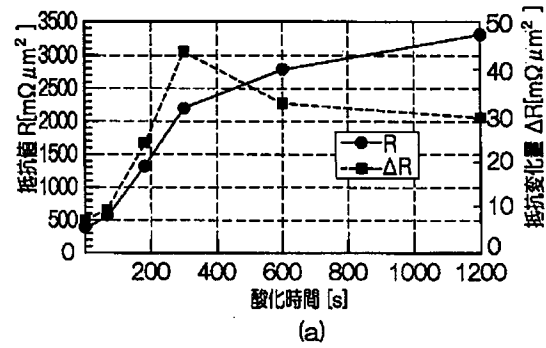


(a)



(b)

【図33】



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Fターム(参考) 2G017 AA10 AB07 AD54

5D034 BA04 BA15 CA04 CA08

5E049 AA04 AA09 AC00 AC05 BA12

CB02 DB12